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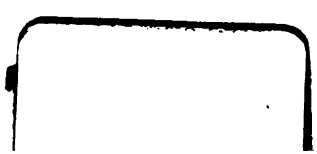

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ASTOR, LENOX AND
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"The two boys marched out of the cover of the rock into the open"

Photogravure — From drawing by L. J. Bridgman

ORIENTAL EDITION

Wee Willie Winkie

The City of Dreadful Night

American Notes

By Rudyard Kipling

Author of

"Plain Tales from the Hills," "Soldiers Three," "The Day's Work," etc.

Illustrated by

L. J. Bridgman

New York and Boston

H. M. Caldwell Company

Publishers

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PREFACE

THIS is the last book of the series, and it naturally ends with the little children, who always trot after the tail of any procession. Only women understand children thoroughly; but if a mere man keeps very quiet, and humbles himself properly, and refrains from talking down to his superiors, the children will sometimes be good to him and let him see what they think about the world. But, even after patient investigation and the condescension of the nursery, it is hard to draw babies correctly.

RUDYARD KIPLING.

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WEE WILLIE WINKIE

"An officer and a gentleman."

HIS full name was Percival William Williams, but he picked up the other name in a nursery-book, and that was the end of the christened titles. His mother's *ayah* called him Willie-*Baba*, but as he never paid the faintest attention to anything that the *ayah* said, her wisdom did not help matters.

His father was the Colonel of the 195th, and as soon as Wee Willie Winkie was old enough to understand what Military Discipline meant, Colonel Williams put him under it. There was no other way of managing the child. When he was good for a week, he drew good-conduct pay; and when he was bad, he was deprived of his good-conduct stripe. Generally he was bad, for India offers so many chances to little six-year-olds of going wrong.

Children resent familiarity from strangers, and Wee Willie Winkie was a very particular child. Once he accepted an acquaintance, he was graciously pleased to thaw. He accepted Brandis, a subaltern of the 195th, on sight. Brandis was having tea at the Colonel's, and Wee Willie Win-

He entered strong in the possession of a good-conduct badge won for not chasing the hens round the compound. He regarded Brandis with gravity for at least ten minutes, and then delivered himself of his opinion.

"I like you," said he, slowly, getting off his chair and coming over to Brandis. "I like you. I shall call you Coppy, because of your hair. Do you *mind* being called Coppy? it is because of ve hair, you know."

Here was one of the most embarrassing of Wee Willie Winkie's peculiarities. He would look at a stranger for some time, and then, without warning or explanation, would give him a name. And the name stuck. No regimental penalties could break Wee Willie Winkie of this habit. He lost his good-conduct badge for christening the Commissioner's wife "Pobs"; but nothing that the Colonel could do made the Station forego the nickname, and Mrs. Collen remained Mrs. "Pobs" till the end of her stay. So Brandis was christened "Coppy," and rose, therefore, in the estimation of the regiment.

If Wee Willie Winkie took an interest in any one, the fortunate man was envied alike by the mess and the rank and file. And in their envy lay no suspicion of self-interest. "The Colonel's son" was idolized on his own merits entirely. Yet Wee Willie Winkie was not lovely. His face

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"Coppy had let him wear for five rapturous minutes his own big sword."

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was permanently freckled, as his legs were permanently scratched, and in spite of his mother's almost tearful remonstrances he had insisted upon having his long yellow locks cut short in the military fashion. "I want my hair like Sergeant Tummil's," said Wee Willie Winkie, and, his father abetting, the sacrifice was accomplished.

Three weeks after the bestowal of his youthful affections on Lieutenant Brandis—henceforward to be called "Coppy" for the sake of brevity—Wee Willie Winkie was destined to behold strange things and far beyond his comprehension.

Coppy returned his liking with interest. Coppy had let him wear for five rapturous minutes his own big sword—just as tall as Wee Willie Winkie. Coppy had promised him a terrier puppy; and Coppy had permitted him to witness the miraculous operation of shaving. Nay, more—Coppy had said that even he, Wee Willie Winkie, would rise in time to the ownership of a box of shiny knives, a silver soap-box and a silver-handled "sputter-brush," as Wee Willie Winkie called it. Decidedly, there was no one except his father, who could give or take away good-conduct badges at pleasure, half so wise, strong, and valiant as Coppy with the Afghan and Egyptian medals on his breast. Why, then, should Coppy be guilty of the un-

manly weakness of kissing—vehemently kissing —a "big girl," Miss Allardyce to wit? In the course of a morning ride, Wee Willie Winkie had seen Coppy so doing, and, like the gentleman he was, had promptly wheeled round and cantered back to his groom, lest the groom should also see.

Under ordinary circumstances he would have spoken to his father, but he felt instinctively that this was a matter on which Coppy ought first to be consulted.

"Coppy," shouted Wee Willie Winkie, reining up outside that subaltern's bungalow early one morning—"I want to see you, Coppy!"

"Come in, young 'un," returned Coppy, who was at early breakfast in the midst of his dogs. "What mischief have you been getting into now?"

Wee Willie Winkie had done nothing notoriously bad for three days, and so stood on a pinnacle of virtue.

"I've been doing nothing bad," said he, curling himself into a long chair with a studious affectation of the Colonel's languor after a hot parade. He buried his freckled nose in a tea-cup and, with eyes staring rou dly over the rim, asked:—"I say, Coppy, is it p roper to kiss big girls?"

"By Jove! You're eginning early. Who do you want to kiss?"

"No one. My muvver's always kissing me if I don't stop her. If it isn't pwoper, how was you kissing Major Allardyce's big girl last morning, by ve canal?"

Coppy's brow wrinkled. He and Miss Allardyce had with great craft managed to keep their engagement secret for a fortnight. There were urgent and imperative reasons why Major Allardyce should not know how matters stood for at least another month, and this small marplot had discovered a great deal too much.

"I saw you," said Wee Willie Winkie, calmly. "But ve groom didn't see. I said, '*Hut jao.*'"

"Oh, you had that much sense, you young Rip," groaned poor Coppy, half amused and half angry. "And how many people may you have told about it?"

"Only me myself. You didn't tell when I twied to wide ve buffalo ven my pony was lame; and I fought you wouldn't like."

"Winkie," said Coppy, enthusiastically, shaking the small hand, "you're the best of good fellows. Look here, you can't understand all these things. One of these days—hang it, how can I make you see it!—I'm going to marry Miss Allardyce, and then she'll be Mrs. Coppy, as you say. If your young mind is so scandalized at the idea of kissing big girls, go and tell your father."

"What will happen?" said Wee Willie Winkie, who firmly believed that his father was omnipotent.

"I shall get into trouble," said Coppy, playing his trump card with an appealing look at the holder of the ace.

"Ven I won't," said Wee Willie Winkie, briefly. "But my faver says it's un-man-ly to be always kissing, and I didn't fink *you'd* do vat, Coppy."

"I'm not always kissing, old chap. It's only now and then, and when you're bigger you'll do it too. Your father meant it's not good for little boys."

"Ah!" said Wee Willie Winkie, now fully enlightened. "It's like ve sputter-brush?"

"Exactly," said Coppy, gravely.

"But I don't fink I'll ever want to kiss big girls, nor no one, 'cept my muvver. And I *must* vat, you know."

There was a long pause, broken by Wee Willie Winkie.

"Are you fond of vis big girl, Coppy?"

"Awfully!" said Coppy.

"Fonder van you are of Bell or ve Butcha—or me?"

"It's in a different way," said Coppy. "You see, one of these days Miss Allardyce will belong to me, but you'll grow up and command the

Regiment and — all sorts of things. It's quite different, you see."

"Very well," said Wee Willie Winkie, rising. "If you're fond of ve big girl, I won't tell any one. I must go now."

Coppy rose and escorted his small guest to the door, adding: "You're the best of little fellows, Winkie. I tell you what. In thirty days from now you can tell if you like — tell any one you like."

Thus the secret of the Brandis-Allardyce engagement was dependent on a little child's word. Coppy, who knew Wee Willie Winkie's idea of truth, was at ease, for he felt that he would not break promises. Wee Willie Winkie betrayed a special and unusual interest in Miss Allardyce, and, slowly revolving round that embarrassed young lady, was used to regard her gravely with unwinking eye. He was trying to discover why Coppy should have kissed her. She was not half so nice as his own mother. On the other hand, she was Coppy's property, and would in time belong to him. Therefore it behooved him to treat her with as much respect as Coppy's big sword or shiny pistol.

The idea that he shared a great secret in common with Coppy kept Wee Willie Winkie unusually virtuous for three weeks. Then the Old Adam broke out, and he made what he called a

"camp-fire" at the bottom of the garden. How could he have foreseen that the flying sparks would have lighted the Colonel's little hayrick and consumed a week's store for the horses? Sudden and swift was the punishment—deprivation of the good-conduct badge and, most sorrowful of all, two days' confinement to barracks—the house and veranda—coupled with the withdrawal of the light of his father's countenance.

He took the sentence like the man he strove to be, drew himself up with a quivering under-lip, saluted, and, once clear of the room, ran to weep bitterly in his nursery—called by him "my quarters." Coppy came in the afternoon and attempted to console the culprit.

"I'm under awwest," said Wee Willie Winkie, mournfully, "and I didn't ought to speak to you."

Very early the next morning he climbed on to the roof of the house—that was not forbidden—and beheld Miss Allardyce going for a ride.

"Where are you going?" cried Wee Willie Winkie.

"Across the river," she answered, and trotted forward.

Now the cantonment in which the 195th lay was bounded on the north by a river—dry in the winter. From his earliest years, Wee Willie Winkie had been forbidden to go across the

river, and had noted that even Coppy—the almost almighty Coppy—had never set foot beyond it. Wee Willie Winkie had once been read to, out of a big blue book, the history of the Princess and the Goblins—a most wonderful tale of a land where the Goblins were always warring with the children of men until they were defeated by one Curdie. Ever since that date it seemed to him that the bare black and purple hills across the river were inhabited by Goblins, and, in truth, every one had said that there lived the Bad Men. Even in his own house the lower halves of the windows were covered with green paper on account of the Bad Men who might, if allowed clear view, fire into peaceful drawing-rooms and comfortable bedrooms. Certainly, beyond the river, which was the end of all the Earth, lived the Bad Men. And here was Major Allardyce's big girl, Coppy's property, preparing to venture into their borders! What would Coppy say if anything happened to her? If the Goblins ran off with her as they did with Curdie's Princess? She must at all hazards be turned back.

The house was still. Wee Willie Winkie reflected for a moment on the very terrible wrath of his father; and then—broke his arrest! It was a crime unspeakable. The low sun threw his shadow, very large and very black, on the trim garden-paths, as he went down to the stables

and ordered his pony. It seemed to him in the hush of the dawn that all the big world had been bidden to stand still and look at Wee Willie Winkie guilty of mutiny. The drowsy groom handed him his mount, and, since the one great sin made all others insignificant, Wee Willie Winkie said that he was going to ride over to Coppy Sahib, and went out at a foot-pace, stepping on the soft mould of the flower-borders.

The devastating track of the pony's feet was the last misdeed that cut him off from all sympathy of Humanity. He turned into the road, leaned forward, and rode as fast as the pony could put foot to the ground in the direction of the river.

But the liveliest of twelve-two ponies can do little against the long canter of a Waler. Miss Allardyce was far ahead, had passed through the crops, beyond the Police-post, when all the guards were asleep, and her mount was scattering the pebbles of the river bed as Wee Willie Winkie left the cantonment and British India behind him. Bowed forward and still flogging, Wee Willie Winkie shot into Afghan territory, and could just see Miss Allardyce a black speck, flickering across the stony plain. The reason of her wandering was simple enough. Coppy, in a tone of too-hastily-assumed authority, had told her over night that she must not ride out by the

river. And she had gone to prove her own spirit and teach Coppy a lesson.

Almost at the foot of the inhospitable hills, Wee Willie Winkie saw the Waler blunder and come down heavily. Miss Allardyce struggled clear, but her ankle had been severely twisted, and she could not stand. Having thus demonstrated her spirit, she wept copiously, and was surprised by the apparition of a white, wide-eyed child in khaki, on a nearly spent pony.

"Are you badly, badly hurted?" shouted Wee Willie Winkie, as soon as he was within range. "You didn't ought to be here."

"I don't know," said Miss Allardyce, ruefully, ignoring the reproof. "Good gracious, child, what are *you* doing here?"

"You said you was going acwoss ve wiver," panted Wee Willie Winkie, throwing himself off his pony. "And nobody—not even Coppy—must go acwoss ve wiver, and I came after you ever so hard, but you wouldn't stop, and now you've hurted yourself, and Coppy will be angwy wiv me, and—I've bwoken my awwest! I've bwoken my awwest!"

The future Colonel of the 195th sat down and sobbed. In spite of the pain in her ankle the girl was moved.

"Have you ridden all the way from cantonments, little man? What for?"

"You belonged to Coppy. Coppy told me so!" wailed Wee Willie Winkie, disconsolately. "I saw him kissing you, and he said he was fonder of you van Bell or ve Butcha or me. And so I came. You must get up and come back. You didn't ought to be here. Vis is a bad place, and I've bwoken my awwest."

"I can't move, Winkie," said Miss Allardyce, with a groan. "I've hurt my foot. What shall I do?"

She showed a readiness to weep afresh, which steadied Wee Willie Winkie, who had been brought up to believe that tears were the depth of unmanliness. Still, when one is as great a sinner as Wee Willie Winkie, even a man may be permitted to break down.

"Winkie," said Miss Allardyce, "when you've rested a little, ride back and tell them to send out something to carry me back in. It hurts fearfully."

The child sat still for a little time and Miss Allardyce closed her eyes; the pain was nearly making her faint. She was roused by Wee Willie Winkie tying up the reins on his pony's neck and setting it free with a vicious cut of his whip that made it whicker. The little animal headed toward the cantonments.

"Oh, Winkie! What are you doing?"

"Hush!" said Wee Willie Winkie. "Vere's a

man coming—one of ve Bad Men. I must stay wiv you. My faver says a man must *always* look after a girl. Jack will go home, and ven vey'll come and look for us. Vat's why I let him go."

Not one man but two or three had appeared from behind the rocks of the hills, and the heart of Wee Willie Winkie sank within him, for just in this manner were the Goblins wont to steal out and vex Curdie's soul. Thus had they played in Curdie's garden, he had seen the picture, and thus had they frightened the Princess's nurse. He heard them talking to each other, and recognized with joy the bastard Pushto that he had picked up from one of his father's grooms lately dismissed. People who spoke that tongue could not be the Bad Men. They were only natives after all.

They came up to the bowlders on which Miss Allardyce's horse had blundered.

Then rose from the rock Wee Willie Winkie, child of the Dominant Race, aged six and three-quarters, and said briefly and emphatically "*Jao!*" The pony had crossed the river-bed.

The men laughed, and laughter from natives was the one thing Wee Willie Winkie could not tolerate. He asked them what they wanted and why they did not depart. Other men with most evil faces and crooked-stocked guns crept out of

the shadows of the hills, till, soon, Wee Willie Winkie was face to face with an audience some twenty strong. Miss Allardyce screamed.

"Who are you?" said one of the men.

"I am the Colonel Sahib's son, and my order is that you go at once. You black men are frightening the Miss Sahib. One of you must run into cantonments and take the news that Miss Sahib has hurt herself, and that the Colonel's son is here with her."

"Put our feet into the trap?" was the laughing reply. "Hear this boy's speech!"

"Say that I sent you—I, the Colonel's son. They will give you money."

"What is the use of this talk? Take up the child and the girl, and we can at least ask for the ransom. Ours are the villages on the heights," said a voice in the background.

These *were* the Bad Men—worse than Goblins—and it needed all Wee Willie Winkie's training to prevent him from bursting into tears. But he felt that to cry before a native, excepting only his mother's *ayah*, would be an infamy greater than any mutiny. Moreover, he, as future Colonel of the 195th, had that grim regiment at his back.

"Are you going to carry us away?" said Wee Willie Winkie, very blanched and uncomfortable.

"Yes, my little *Sahib Bahadur*," said the tallest of the men, "and eat you afterward."

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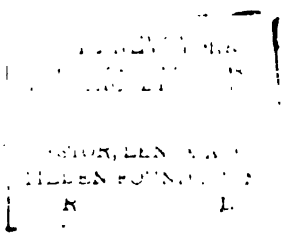
"'Say that I sent you — I, the colonel's son.'"



"That is child's talk," said Wee Willie Winkie. "Men do not eat men."

A yell of laughter interrupted him, but he went on firmly,—"And if you do carry us away, I tell you that all my regiment will come up in a day and kill you all without leaving one. Who will take my message to the Colonel Sahib?"

Speech in any vernacular—and Wee Willie Winkie had a colloquial acquaintance with three —was easy to the boy who could not yet manage his "r's" and "th's" aright.

Another man joined the conference, crying:—"O foolish men! What this babe says is true. He is the heart's heart of those white troops. For the sake of peace let them go both, for if he be taken, the regiment will break loose and gut the valley. *Our* villages are in the valley, and we shall not escape. That regiment are devils. They broke Khoda Yar's breast-bone with kicks when he tried to take the rifles; and if we touch this child they will fire and rape and plunder for a month, till nothing remains. Better to send a man back to take the message and get a reward. I say that this child is their God, and that they will spare none of us, nor our women, if we harm him."

It was Din Mahommed, the dismissed groom of the Colonel, who made the diversion, and an angry and heated discussion followed. Wee

Willie Winkie, standing over Miss Allardyce, waited the upshot. Surely his "wegiment," his own "wegiment," would not desert him if they knew of his extremity.

* * * * * *

The riderless pony brought the news to the 195th, though there had been consternation in the Colonel's household for an hour before. The little beast came in through the parade ground in front of the main barracks, where the men were settling down to play Spoil-five till the afternoon. Devlin, the Color Sergeant of E Company, glanced at the empty saddle and tumbled through the barrack-rooms, kicking up each Room Corporal as he passed. "Up, ye beggars! There's something happened to the Colonel's son," he shouted.

"He couldn't fall off! S'elp me, 'e *couldn't* fall off," blubbered a drummer-boy. "Go an' hunt acrost the river. He's over there if he's anywhere, an' maybe those Pathans have got 'im. For the love o' Gawd don't look for 'im in the nullahs! Let's go over the river."

"There's sense in Mott yet," said Devlin. "E Company, double out to the river—sharp!"

So E Company, in its shirt-sleeves mainly, doubled for the dear life, and in the rear toiled the perspiring Sergeant, adjuring it to double yet

faster. The cantonment was alive with the men of the 195th hunting for Wee Willie Winkie, and the Colonel finally overtook E Company, far too exhausted to swear, struggling in the pebbles of the river-bed.

Up the hill under which Wee Willie Winkie's Bad Men were discussing the wisdom of carrying off the child and the girl, a look-out fired two shots.

"What have I said?" shouted Din Mahommed. "There is the warning! The *pulton* are out already and are coming across the plain! Get away! Let us not be seen with the boy!"

The men waited for an instant, and then, as another shot was fired, withdrew into the hills, silently as they had appeared.

"The wegiment is coming," said Wee Willie Winkie, confidently, to Miss Allardyce, "and it's all wight. Don't cwy!"

He needed the advice himself, for ten minutes later, when his father came up, he was weeping bitterly with his head in Miss Allardyce's lap.

And the men of the 195th carried him home with shouts and rejoicings; and Coppy, who had ridden a horse into a lather, met him, and, to his intense disgust, kissed him openly in the presence of the men.

But there was balm for his dignity. His father assured him that not only would the

breaking of arrest be condoned, but that the good-conduct badge would be restored as soon as his mother could sew it on his blouse-sleeve. Miss Allardyce had told the Colonel a story that made him proud of his son.

"She belonged to you, Coppy," said Wee Willie Winkie, indicating Miss Allardyce with a grimy forefinger. "I *knew* she didn't ought to go acwoss ve wiver, and I knew ve wegiment would come to me if I sent Jack home."

"You're a hero, Winkie," said Coppy—"a *pukka* hero!"

"I don't know what vat means," said Wee Willie Winkie, "but you mustn't call me Winkie any no more. I'm Percival Will'am Will'ams."

And in this manner did Wee Willie Winkie enter into his manhood.

BAA BAA, BLACK SHEEP

BAA BAA, BLACK SHEEP

Baa Baa, Black Sheep,
Have you any wool?
Yes, Sir, yes, Sir, three bags full.
One for the Master, one for the Dame—
None for the Little Boy that cries down the lane.

—Nursery Rhyme.

THE FIRST BAG

"When I was in my father's house, I was in a better place."

THEY were putting Punch to bed—the *ayah* and the *hamal* and Meeta, the big *Surti* boy with the red and gold turban. Judy, already tucked inside her mosquito-curtains, was nearly asleep. Punch had been allowed to stay up for dinner. Many privileges had been accorded to Punch within the last ten days, and a greater kindness from the people of his world had encompassed his ways and works, which were mostly obstreperous. He sat on the edge of his bed and swung his bare legs defiantly.

"Punch-*baba* going to bye-lo?" said the *ayah*, suggestively.

"No," said Punch. "Punch-*baba* wants the story about the Ranee that was turned into a

tiger. Meeta must tell it, and the *hamal* shall hide behind the door and make tiger-noises at the proper time."

"But Judy-*baba* will wake up," said the *ayah*.

"Judy-*baba* is waking," piped a small voice from the mosquito-curtains. "There was a Ranee that lived at Delhi. Go on, Meeta," and she fell fast asleep again while Meeta began the story.

Never had Punch secured the telling of that tale with so little opposition. He reflected for a long time. The *hamal* made the tiger-noises in twenty different keys.

"'Top!" said Punch, authoritatively. "Why doesn't Papa come in and say he is going to give me *put-put?*"

"Punch-*baba* is going away," said the *ayah*. "In another week there will be no Punch-*baba* to pull my hair any more." She sighed softly, for the boy of the household was very dear to her heart.

"Up the Ghauts in a train?" said Punch, standing on his bed. "All the way to Nassick where the Ranee-Tiger lives?"

"Not to Nassick this year, little Sahib," said Meeta, lifting him on his shoulder. "Down to the sea where the cocoanuts are thrown, and across the sea in a big ship. Will you take Meeta with you to *Belait?*"

"You shall all come," said Punch, from the height of Meeta's strong arms. "Meeta and the *ayah* and the *hamal* and Bhini-in-the-Garden, and the salaam-Captain-Sahib-snake-man."

There was no mockery in Meeta's voice when he replied—"Great is the Sahib's favor," and laid the little man down in the bed, while the *ayah*, sitting in the moonlight at the doorway, lulled him to sleep with an interminable canticle such as they sing in the Roman Catholic Church at Parel. Punch curled himself into a ball and slept.

Next morning Judy shouted that there was a rat in the nursery, and thus he forgot to tell her the wonderful news. It did not much matter, for Judy was only three and she would not have understood. But Punch was five; and he knew that going to England would be much nicer than a trip to Nassick.

* * * * * *

And Papa and Mamma sold the brougham and the piano, and stripped the house, and curtailed the allowance of crockery for the daily meals, and took long council together over a bundle of letters bearing the Rocklington postmark.

"The worst of it is that one can't be certain of anything," said Papa, pulling his moustache. "The letters in themselves are excellent, and the terms are moderate enough."

"The worst of it is that the children will grow up away from me," thought Mamma: but she did not say it aloud.

"We are only one case among hundreds," said Papa, bitterly. "You shall go Home again in five years, dear."

"Punch will be ten then—and Judy eight. Oh, how long and long and long the time will be! And we have to leave them among strangers."

"Punch is a cheery little chap. He's sure to make friends wherever he goes."

"And who could help loving my Ju?"

They were standing over the cots in the nursery late at night, and I think that Mamma was crying softly. After Papa had gone away, she knelt down by the side of Judy's cot. The *ayah* saw her and put up a prayer that the *memsahib* might never find the love of her children taken away from her and given to a stranger.

Mamma's own prayer was a slightly illogical one. Summarized it ran:—"Let strangers love my children and be as good to them as I should be, but let *me* preserve their love and their confidence forever and ever. Amen." Punch scratched himself in his sleep, and Judy moaned a little. That seems to be the only answer to the prayer: and, next day, they all went down to the sea, and there was a scene at the Apollo

Bunder when Punch discovered that Meeta could not come too, and Judy learned that the *ayah* must be left behind. But Punch found a thousand fascinating things in the rope, block, and steam-pipe line on the big P. and O. Steamer, long before Meeta and the *ayah* had dried their tears.

"Come back, Punch-*baba*," said the *ayah*.

"Come back," said Meeta, "and be a *Burra Sahib*."

"Yes," said Punch, lifted up in his father's arms to wave good-bye. "Yes, I will come back, and I will be a *Burra Sahib Baha dur!*"

At the end of the first day Punch demanded to be set down in England, which he was certain must be close at hand. Next day there was a merry breeze, and Punch was very sick. "When I come back to Bombay," said Punch on his recovery, "I will come by the road—in a broom-*gharri*. This is a very naughty ship."

The Swedish boatswain consoled him, and he modified his opinions as the voyage went on. There was so much to see and to handle and ask questions about that Punch nearly forgot the *ayah* and Meeta and the *hamal*, and with difficulty remembered a few words of the Hindustani once his second-speech.

But Judy was much worse. The day before the steamer reached Southampton, Mamma asked

her if she would not like to see the *ayah* again. Judy's blue eyes turned to the stretch of sea that had swallowed all her tiny past, and she said: "*Ayah!* What *ayah?*"

Mamma cried over her and Punch marveled. It was then that he heard for the first time Mamma's passionate appeal to him never to let Judy forget Mamma. Seeing that Judy was young, ridiculously young, and that Mamma, every evening for four weeks past, had come into the cabin to sing her and Punch to sleep with a mysterious rune that he called "Sonny, my soul," Punch could not understand what Mamma meant. But he strove to do his duty; for, the moment Mamma left the cabin, he said to Judy: "Ju, you bemember Mamma?"

"'Torse I do," said Judy.

"Then *always* bemember Mamma, 'r else I won't give you the paper ducks that the red-haired Captain Sahib cut out for me."

So Judy promised always to "bemember Mamma."

Many and many a time was Mamma's command laid upon Punch, and Papa would say the same thing with an insistence that awed the child.

"You must make haste and learn to write, Punch," said Papa, "and then you'll be able to write letters to us in Bombay."

"I'll come into your room," said Punch, and Papa choked.

Papa and Mamma were always choking in those days. If Punch took Judy to task for not "bemembering," they choked. If Punch sprawled on the sofa in the Southampton lodging-house and sketched his future in purple and gold, they choked; and so they did if Judy put up her mouth for a kiss.

Through many days all four were vagabonds on the face of the earth:—Punch with no one to give orders to, Judy too young for anything, and Papa and Mamma grave, distracted, and choking.

"Where," demanded Punch, wearied of a loathsome contrivance on four wheels with a mound of luggage atop—"*where* is our broom-*gharri?* This thing talks so much that *I* can't talk. Where is our *own* broom-*gharri?* When I was at Bandstand before we comed away, I asked Inverarity Sahib why he was sitting in it, and he said it was his own. And I said, 'I will *give* it you'—I like Inverarity Sahib—and I said, 'Can you put your legs through the pully-wag loops by the windows?' And Inverarity Sahib said No, and laughed. *I* can put my legs through the pully-wag loops. I can put my legs through *these* pully-wag loops. Look! Oh, Mamma's crying again! I didn't know. I wasn't not to do *so.*"

Punch drew his legs out of the loops of the four-wheeler: the door opened and he slid to the earth, in a cascade of parcels, at the door of an austere little villa whose gates bore the legend "Downe Lodge." Punch gathered himself together and eyed the house with disfavor. It stood on a sandy road, and a cold wind tickled his knickerbockered legs.

"Let us go away," said Punch. "This is not a pretty place."

But Mamma and Papa and Judy had quitted the cab, and all the luggage was being taken into the house. At the doorstep stood a woman in black, and she smiled largely, with dry chapped lips. Behind her was a man, big, bony, grey, and lame as to one leg—behind him a boy of twelve, black-haired and oily in appearance. Punch surveyed the trio, and advanced without fear, as he had been accustomed to do in Bombay when callers came and he happened to be playing in the veranda.

"How do you do?" said he. "I am Punch." But they were all looking at the luggage—all except the grey man, who shook hands with Punch and said he was "a smart little fellow." There was much running about and banging of boxes, and Punch curled himself up on the sofa in the dining-room and considered things.

"I don't like these people," said Punch. "But

never mind. We'll go away soon. We have always went away soon from everywhere. I wish we was gone back to Bombay *soon*."

The wish bore no fruit. For six days Mamma wept at intervals, and showed the woman in black all Punch's clothes—a liberty which Punch resented. "But p'raps she's a new white *ayah*," he thought. "I'm to call her Antirosa, but she doesn't call *me* Sahib. She says just Punch," he confided to Judy. "What is Antirosa?"

Judy didn't know. Neither she nor Punch had heard anything of an animal called an aunt. Their world had been Papa and Mamma, who knew everything, permitted everything, and loved everybody—even Punch when he used to go into the garden at Bombay and fill his nails with mould after the weekly nail-cutting, because, as he explained between two strokes of the slipper to his sorely tried Father, his fingers "felt so new at the ends."

In an undefined way Punch judged it advisable to keep both parents between himself and the woman in black and the boy in black hair. He did not approve of them. He liked the grey man, who had expressed a wish to be called "Uncle-harri." They nodded at each other when they met, and the grey man showed him a little ship with rigging that took up and down.

"She is a model of the Brisk—the little Brisk

that was sore exposed that day at Navarino." The grey man hummed the last words and fell into a reverie. "I'll tell you about Navarino, Punch, when we go for walks together; and you mustn't touch the ship, because she's the Brisk."

Long before that walk, the first of many, was taken, they roused Punch and Judy in the chill dawn of a February morning to say Good-bye; and of all people in the wide earth to Papa and Mamma—both crying this time. Punch was very sleepy and Judy was cross.

"Don't forget us," pleaded Mamma. "Oh, my little son, don't forget us, and see that Judy remembers too."

"I've told Judy to bemember," said Punch, wriggling, for his father's beard tickled his neck. "I've told Judy—ten—forty—'leven thousand times. But Ju's so young—quite a baby—isn't she?"

"Yes," said Papa, "quite a baby, and you must be good to Judy, and make haste to learn to write and—and—and" . . .

Punch was back in his bed again. Judy was fast asleep, and there was the rattle of a cab below. Papa and Mamma had gone away. Not to Nassick; that was across the sea. To some place much nearer, of course, and equally of course, they would return. They came back after dinner-parties, and Papa had come back

after he had been to a place called "The Snows," and Mamma with him, to Punch and Judy at Mrs. Inverarity's house in Marine Lines. Assuredly they would come back again. So Punch fell asleep till the true morning, when the black-haired boy met him with the information that Papa and Mamma had gone to Bombay, and that he and Judy were to stay at Downe Lodge "forever." Antirosa, tearfully appealed to for a contradiction, said that Harry had spoken the truth, and that it behooved Punch to fold up his clothes neatly on going to bed. Punch went out and wept bitterly with Judy, into whose fair head he had driven some ideas of the meaning of separation.

When a matured man discovers that he has been deserted by Providence, deprived of his God, and cast without help, comfort, or sympathy, upon a world which is new and strange to him, his despair, which may find expression in evil-living, the writing of his experiences, or the more satisfactory diversion of suicide, is generally supposed to be impressive. A child, under exactly similar circumstances as far as its knowledge goes, cannot very well curse God and die. It howls till its nose is red, its eyes are sore, and its head aches. Punch and Judy, through no fault of their own, had lost all their world. They sat in the hall and cried; the black-haired boy looking on from afar.

The model of the ship availed nothing, though the grey man assured Punch that he might pull the rigging up and down as much as he pleased; and Judy was promised free entry into the kitchen. They wanted Papa and Mamma gone to Bombay beyond the seas, and their grief while it lasted was without remedy.

When the tears ceased the house was very still. Antirosa had decided it was better to let the children "have their cry out," and the boy had gone to school. Punch raised his head from the floor and sniffed mournfully. Judy was nearly asleep. Three short years had not taught her how to bear sorrow with full knowledge. There was a distant, dull boom in the air—a repeated heavy thud. Punch knew that sound in Bombay in the Monsoon. It was the sea—the sea that must be traversed before any one could get to Bombay.

"Quick, Ju!" he cried, "we're close to the sea. I can hear it! Listen! That's where they've went. P'raps we can catch them if we was in time. They didn't mean to go without us. They've only forgot."

"Iss," said Judy. "They've only forgotted. Less go to the sea."

The hall-door was open and so was the garden-gate.

"It's very, very big, this place," he said, look-

ing cautiously down the road, "and we will get lost; but *I* will find a man and order him to take me back to my house—like I did in Bombay."

He took Judy by the hand, and the two fled hatless in the direction of the sound of the sea. Downe Villa was almost the last of a range of newly built houses running out, through a chaos of brick-mounds, to a heath where gypsies occasionally camped and where the Garrison Artillery of Rocklington practiced. There were few people to be seen, and the children might have been taken for those of the soldiery who ranged far. Half an hour the wearied little legs tramped across heath, potato-field, and sand-dune.

"I'se so tired," said Judy, "and Mamma will be angry."

"Mamma's *never* angry. I suppose she is waiting at the sea now while Papa gets tickets. We'll find them and go along with. Ju, you mustn't sit down. Only a little more and we'll come to the sea. Ju, if you sit down I'll *thmack* you!" said Punch.

They climbed another dune, and came upon the great grey sea at low tide. Hundreds of crabs were scuttling about the beach, but there was no trace of Papa and Mamma, not even of a ship upon the waters—nothing but sand and mud for miles and miles.

And "Uncleharri" found them by chance—

very muddy and very forlorn—Punch dissolved in tears, but trying to divert Judy with an "ickle trab," and Judy wailing to the pitiless horizon for "Mamma, Mamma!"—and again "Mamma!"

THE SECOND BAG

Ah, well-a-day, for we are souls bereaved!
Of all the creatures under Heaven's wide scope
We are most hopeless, who had once most hope,
And most beliefless, who had most believed.
—The City of Dreadful Night.

ALL this time not a word about Black Sheep. He came later, and Harry the black-haired boy was mainly responsible for his coming.

Judy—who could help loving little Judy?—passed, by special permit, into the kitchen and thence straight to Aunty Rosa's heart. Harry was Aunty Rosa's one child, and Punch was the extra boy about the house. There was no special place for him or his little affairs, and he was forbidden to sprawl on sofas and explain his ideas about the manufacture of this world and his hopes for his future. Sprawling was lazy and wore out sofas, and little boys were not expected to talk. They were talked to, and the talking to was intended for the benefit of their morals. As the unquestioned despot of the house

at Bombay, Punch could not quite understand how he came to be of no account in this his new life.

Harry might reach across the table and take what he wanted; Judy might point and get what she wanted. Punch was forbidden to do either. The grey man was his great hope and stand-by for many months after Mamma and Papa left, and he had forgotten to tell Judy to "bemember Mamma."

This lapse was excusable, because in the interval he had been introduced by Aunty Rosa to two very impressive things—an abstraction called God, the intimate friend and ally of Aunty Rosa, generally believed to live behind the kitchen-range because it was hot there—and a dirty brown book filled with unintelligible dots and marks. Punch was always anxious to oblige everybody. He, therefore, welded the story of the Creation on to what he could recollect of his Indian fairy tales, and scandalized Aunty Rosa by repeating the result to Judy. It was a sin, a grievous sin, and Punch was talked to for a quarter of an hour. He could not understand where the iniquity came in, but was careful not to repeat the offence, because Aunty Rosa told him that God had heard every word he had said and was very angry. If this were true why didn't God come and say so, thought Punch, and

dismissed the matter from his mind. Afterward he learned to know the Lord as the only thing in the world more awful than Aunty Rosa—as a Creature that stood in the background and counted the strokes of the cane.

But the reading was, just then, a much more serious matter than any creed. Aunty Rosa sat him upon a table and told him that A B meant ab.

"Why?" said Punch. "A is a and B is bee. *Why* does A B mean ab?"

"Because I tell you it does," said Aunty Rosa, "and you've got to say it."

Punch said it accordingly, and for a month, hugely against his will, stumbled through the brown book, not in the least comprehending what it meant. But Uncle Harry, who walked much and generally alone, was wont to come into the nursery and suggest to Aunty Rosa that Punch should walk with him. He seldom spoke, but he showed Punch all Rocklington, from the mud-banks and the sand of the back-bay to the great harbors where ships lay at anchor, and the dockyards where the hammers were never still, and the marine-store shops, and the shiny brass counters in the Offices where Uncle Harry went once every three months with a slip of blue paper and received sovereigns in exchange; for he held a wound-pension. Punch heard, too, from

his lips the story of the battle of Navarino, where the sailors of the Fleet, for three days afterward, were deaf as posts and could only sign to each other. "That was because of the noise of the guns," said Uncle Harry, "and I have got the wadding of a bullet somewhere inside me now."

Punch regarded him with curiosity. He had not the least idea what wadding was, and his notion of a bullet was a dockyard cannon-ball bigger than his own head. How could Uncle Harry keep a cannon-ball inside him? He was ashamed to ask, for fear Uncle Harry might be angry.

Punch had never known what anger—real anger—meant until one terrible day when Harry had taken his paint-box to paint a boat with, and Punch had protested with a loud and lamentable voice. Then Uncle Harry had appeared on the scene and, muttering something about "strangers' children," had with a stick smitten the black-haired boy across the shoulders till he wept and yelled, and Aunty Rosa came in and abused Uncle Harry for cruelty to his own flesh and blood, and Punch shuddered to the tips of his shoes. "It wasn't my fault," he explained to the boy, but both Harry and Aunty Rosa said that it was, and that Punch had told tales, and for a week there were no more walks with Uncle Harry.

But that week brought a great joy to Punch.

He had repeated till he was thrice weary the statement that "the Cat lay on the Mat and the Rat came in."

"Now I can truly read," said Punch, "and now I will never read anything in the world."

He put the brown book in the cupboard where his school-books lived and accidentally tumbled out a venerable volume, without covers, labelled Sharpe's Magazine. There was the most portentous picture of a griffin on the first page, with verses below. The griffin carried off one sheep a day from a German village, till a man came with a "falchion" and split the griffin open. Goodness only knew what a falchion was, but there was the Griffin, and his history was an improvement upon the eternal Cat.

"This," said Punch, "means things, and now I will know all about everything in all the world." He read till the light failed, not understanding a tithe of the meaning, but tantalized by glimpses of new worlds hereafter to be revealed.

"What is a 'falchion'? What is a 'e-wee lamb'? What is a 'base *uss*urper'? What is a 'verdant me-ad'?" he demanded, with flushed cheeks, at bedtime, of the astonished Aunt Rosa.

"Say your prayers and go to sleep," she replied, and that was all the help Punch then or af-

terward found at her hands in the new and delightful exercise of reading.

"Aunt Rosa only knows about God and things like that," argued Punch. "Uncle Harry will tell me."

The next walk proved that Uncle Harry could not help either; but he allowed Punch to talk, and even sat down on a bench to hear about the Griffin. Other walks brought other stories as Punch ranged further afield, for the house held large store of old books that no one ever opened —from Frank Fairlegh in serial numbers, and the earlier poems of Tennyson, contributed anonymously to Sharpe's Magazine, to '62 Exhibition Catalogues, gay with colors and delightfully incomprehensible, and odd leaves of Gulliver's Travels.

As soon as Punch could string a few pot-hooks together, he wrote to Bombay, demanding by return of post "all the books in all the world." Papa could not comply with this modest indent, but sent Grimm's Fairy Tales and a Hans Andersen. That was enough. If he were only left alone Punch could pass, at any hour he chose, into a land of his own, beyond the reach of Aunty Rosa and her God, Harry and his teasements, and Judy's claims to be played with.

"Don't disturve me, I'm reading. Go and play in the kitchen," grunted Punch. "Aunty Rosa

lets *you* go there." Judy was cutting her second teeth and was fretful. She appealed to Aunty Rosa, who descended on Punch.

"I was reading," he explained, "reading a book. I *want* to read."

"You're only doing that to show off," said Aunty Rosa. "But we'll see. Play with Judy now, and don't open a book for a week."

Judy did not pass a very enjoyable playtime with Punch, who was consumed with indignation. There was a pettiness at the bottom of the prohibition which puzzled him.

"It's what I like to do," he said, "and she's found out that and stopped me. Don't cry, Ju—it wasn't your fault—*please* don't cry, or she'll say I made you."

Ju loyally mopped up her tears, and the two played in their nursery, a room in the basement and half underground, to which they were regularly sent after the midday dinner while Aunty Rosa slept. She drank wine—that is to say, something from a bottle in the cellaret—for her stomach's sake, but if she did not fall asleep she would sometimes come into the nursery to see that the children were really playing. Now bricks, wooden hoops, ninepins, and chinaware cannot amuse forever, especially when all Fairyland is to be won by the mere opening of a book, and, as often as not, Punch would be discovered read-

ing to Judy or telling her interminable tales. That was an offence in the eyes of the law, and Judy would be whisked off by Aunty Rosa, while Punch was left to play alone, "and be sure that I hear you doing it."

It was not a cheering employ, for he had to make a playful noise. At last, with infinite craft, he devised an arrangement whereby the table could be supported as to three legs on toy bricks, leaving the fourth clear to bring down on the floor. He could work the table with one hand and hold a book with the other. This he did till an evil day when Aunty Rosa pounced upon him unawares and told him that he was "acting a lie."

"If you're old enough to do that," she said—her temper was always worse after dinner—"you're old enough to be beaten."

"But—I'm—I'm not a animal!" said Punch, aghast. He remembered Uncle Harry and the stick, and turned white. Aunty Rosa had hidden a light cane behind her, and Punch was beaten then and there over the shoulders. It was a revelation to him. The room-door was shut, and he was left to weep himself into repentance and work out his own Gospel of Life.

Aunty Rosa, he argued, had the power to beat him with many stripes. It was unjust and cruel, and Mamma and Papa would never have allowed

it. Unless perhaps, as Aunty Rosa seemed to imply, they had sent secret orders. In which case he was abandoned indeed. It would be discreet in the future to propitiate Aunty Rosa, but, then, again, even in matters in which he was innocent, he had been accused of wishing to "show off." He had "shown off" before visitors when he had attacked a strange gentleman —Harry's uncle, not his own—with requests for information about the Griffin and the falchion, and the precise nature of the Tilbury in which Frank Fairlegh rode—all points of paramount interest which he was bursting to understand. Clearly it would not do to pretend to care for Aunty Rosa.

At this point Harry entered and stood afar off, eyeing Punch, a disheveled heap in the corner of the room, with disgust.

"You're a liar—a young liar," said Harry, with great unction, "and you're to have tea down here because you're not fit to speak to us. And you're not to speak to Judy again till Mother gives you leave. You'll corrupt her. You're only fit to associate with the servant. Mother says so."

Having reduced Punch to a second agony of tears, Harry departed upstairs with the news that Punch was still rebellious.

Uncle Harry sat uneasily in the dining-room.

"Damn it all, Rosa," said he, at last, "can't you leave the child alone? He's a good enough little chap when I meet him."

"He puts on his best manners with you, Henry," said Aunty Rosa, "but I'm afraid, I'm very much afraid, that he is the Black Sheep of the family."

Harry heard and stored up the name for future use. Judy cried till she was bidden to stop, her brother not being worth tears; and the evening concluded with the return of Punch to the upper regions and a private sitting at which all the blinding horrors of Hell were revealed to Punch with such store of imagery as Aunty Rosa's narrow mind possessed.

Most grievous of all was Judy's round-eyed reproach, and Punch went to bed in the depths of the Valley of Humiliation. He shared his room with Harry and knew the torture in store. For an hour and a half he had to answer that young gentleman's question as to his motives for telling a lie, and a grievous lie, the precise quantity of punishment inflicted by Aunty Rosa, and had also to profess his deep gratitude for such religious instruction as Harry thought fit to impart.

From that day began the downfall of Punch, now Black Sheep.

"Untrustworthy in one thing, untrustworthy in all," said Aunty Rosa, and Harry felt that

Black Sheep was delivered into his hands. He would wake him up in the night to ask him why he was such a liar.

"I don't know," Punch would reply.

"Then don't you think you ought to get up and pray to God for a new heart?"

"Y-yess."

"Get out and pray, then!" And Punch would get out of bed with raging hate in his heart against all the world, seen and unseen. He was always tumbling into trouble. Harry had a knack of cross-examining him as to his day's doings, which seldom failed to lead him, sleepy and savage, into half a dozen contradictions—all duly reported to Aunty Rosa next morning.

"But it *wasn't* a lie," Punch would begin, charging into a labored explanation that landed him more hopelessly in the mire. "I said that I didn't say my prayers *twice* over in the day, and *that* was on Tuesday. *Once* I did. I *know* I did, but Harry said I didn't," and so forth, till the tension brought tears, and he was dismissed from the table in disgrace.

"You usen't to be as bad as this?" said Judy, awe-stricken at the catalogue of Black Sheep's crimes. "Why are you so bad now?"

"I don't know," Black Sheep would reply. "I'm not, if I only wasn't bothered upside down. I knew what I *did*, and I want to

say so; but Harry always makes it out different somehow, and Aunty Rosa doesn't believe a word I say. Oh, Jul don't *you* say I'm bad too."

"Aunty Rosa says you are," said Judy. "She told the Vicar so when he came yesterday."

"Why does she tell all the people outside the house about me? It isn't fair," said Black Sheep. "When I was in Bombay, and was bad—*doing* bad, not made-up bad like this—Mamma told Papa, and Papa told me he knew, and that was all. *Outside* people didn't know too—even Meeta didn't know."

"I don't remember," said Judy, wistfully. "I was all little then. Mamma was just as fond of you as she was of me, wasn't she?"

"'Course she was. So was Papa. So was everybody."

"Aunty Rosa likes me more than she does you. She says that you are a Trial and a Black Sheep, and I'm not to speak to you more than I can help."

"Always? Not outside of the times when you mustn't speak to me at all?"

Judy nodded her head mournfully. Black Sheep turned away in despair, but Judy's arms were round his neck.

"Never mind, Punch," she whispered. "I *will* speak to you just the same as ever and ever.

You're my own own brother though you are—though Aunty Rosa says you're Bad, and Harry says you're a little coward. He says that if I pulled your hair hard, you'd cry."

"Pull, then," said Punch.

Judy pulled gingerly.

"Pull harder—as hard as you can! There! I don't mind how much you pull it *now*. If you'll speak to me same as ever I'll let you pull it as much as you like—pull it out if you like. But I know if Harry came and stood by and made you do it I'd cry."

So the two children sealed the compact with a kiss, and Black Sheep's heart was cheered within him, and by extreme caution and careful avoidance of Harry he acquired virtue, and was allowed to read undisturbed for a week. Uncle Harry took him for walks and consoled him with rough tenderness, never calling him Black Sheep. "It's good for you, I suppose, Punch," he used to say. "Let us sit down. I'm getting tired." His steps led him now not to the beach, but to the Cemetery of Rocklington, amid the potato-fields. For hours the grey man would sit on a tombstone, while Black Sheep read epitaphs, and then with a sigh would stump home again.

"I shall lie there soon," said he to Black Sheep, one winter evening, when his face showed white as a worn silver coin under the

lights of the chapel-lodge. "You needn't tell Aunty Rosa."

A month later, he turned sharp round, ere half a morning walk was completed, and stumped back to the house. "Put me to bed, Rosa," he muttered. "I've walked my last. The wadding has found me out."

They put him to bed, and for a fortnight the shadow of his sickness lay upon the house, and Black Sheep went to and fro unobserved. Papa had sent him some new books, and he was told to keep quiet. He retired into his own world, and was perfectly happy. Even at night his felicity was unbroken. He could lie in bed and string himself tales of travel and adventure while Harry was downstairs.

"Uncle Harry's going to die," said Judy, who now lived almost entirely with Aunty Rosa.

"I'm very sorry," said Black Sheep, soberly. "He told me that a long time ago."

Aunty Rosa heard the conversation. "Will nothing check your wicked tongue?" she said, angrily. There were blue circles round her eyes.

Black Sheep retreated to the nursery and read "Cometh up as a flower" with deep and uncomprehending interest. He had been forbidden to read it on account of its "sinfulness," but the bonds of the Universe were crumbling, and Aunty Rosa was in great grief.

"I'm glad," said Black Sheep. "She's unhappy now. It wasn't a lie, though. *I* knew. He told me not to tell."

That night Black Sheep woke with a start. Harry was not in the room, and there was a sound of sobbing on the next floor. Then the voice of Uncle Harry, singing the song of the Battle of Navarino, cut through the darkness:

> "Our vanship was the Asia—
> The Albion and Genoa!"

"He's getting well," thought Black Sheep, who knew the song through all its seventeen verses. But the blood froze at his little heart as he thought. The voice leaped an octave and rang shrill as a boatswain's pipe:

> "And next came on the lovely Rose,
> The Philomel, her fire-ship, closed,
> And the little Brisk was sore exposed
> That day at Navarino."

"That day at Navarino, Uncle Harry!" shouted Black Sheep, half wild with excitement and fear of he knew not what.

A door opened and Aunty Rosa screamed up the staircase:—"Hush! For God's sake hush, you little devil. Uncle Harry is *dead!*"

THE THIRD BAG

Journeys end in lovers' meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

"I WONDER what will happen to me now," thought Black Sheep, when the semi-pagan rites peculiar to the burial of the Dead in middle-class houses had been accomplished, and Aunty Rosa, awful in black crape, had returned to this life. "I don't think I've done anything bad that she knows of. I suppose I will soon. She will be very cross after Uncle Harry's dying, and Harry will be cross too. I'll keep in the nursery."

Unfortunately for Punch's plans, it was decided that he should be sent to a day-school which Harry attended. This meant a morning walk with Harry, and perhaps an evening one; but the prospect of freedom in the interval was refreshing. "Harry'll tell everything I do, but I won't do anything," said Black Sheep. Fortified with this virtuous resolution, he went to school only to find that Harry's version of his character had preceded him, and that life was a burden in consequence. He took stock of his associates. Some of them were unclean, some of them talked in dialect, many dropped their h's, and there were two Jews and a negro, or some one

quite as dark, in the assembly. "That's a *hubshi*," said Black Sheep to himself. "Even Meeta used to laugh at a *hubshi*. I don't think this is a proper place." He was indignant for at least an hour, till he reflected that any expostulation on his part would be by Aunty Rosa construed into "showing off," and that Harry would tell the boys.

"How do you like school?" said Aunty Rosa, at the end of the day.

"I think it is a very nice place," said Punch, quietly.

"I suppose you warned the boys of Black Sheep's character?" said Aunty Rosa to Harry.

"Oh, yes," said the censor of Black Sheep's morals. "They know all about him."

"If I was with my father," said Black Sheep, stung to the quick, "I shouldn't *speak* to those boys. He wouldn't let me. They live in shops. I saw them go into shops—where their fathers live and sell things."

"You're too good for that school, are you?" said Aunty Rosa, with a bitter smile. "You ought to be grateful, Black Sheep, that those boys speak to you at all. It isn't every school that takes little liars."

Harry did not fail to make much capital out of Black Sheep's ill-considered remark; with the result that several boys, including the *hubshi*,

demonstrated to Black Sheep the eternal equality of the human race by smacking his head, and his consolation from Aunty Rosa was that it "served him right for being vain." He learned, however, to keep his opinions to himself, and by propitiating Harry in carrying books and the like to secure a little peace. His existence was not too joyful. From nine till twelve he was at school, and from two to four, except on Saturdays. In the evenings he was sent down into the nursery to prepare his lessons for the next day, and every night came the dreaded cross-questionings at Harry's hand. Of Judy he saw but little. She was deeply religious—at six years of age Religion is easy to come by—and sorely divided between her natural love for Black Sheep and her love for Aunty Rosa, who could do wrong.

The lean woman returned that love with interest, and Judy, when she dared, took advantage of this for the remission of Black Sheep's penalties. Failures in lessons at school were punished at home by a week without reading other than school-books, and Harry brought the news of such a failure with glee. Further, Black Sheep was then bound to repeat his lessons at bedtime to Harry, who generally succeeded in making him break down, and consoled him by gloomiest forebodings for the morrow. Harry was at once spy, practical joker,

inquisitor, and Aunty Rosa's deputy executioner. He filled his many posts to admiration. From his actions, now that Uncle Harry was dead, there was no appeal. Black Sheep had not been permitted to keep any self-respect at school: at home he was of course utterly discredited, and grateful for any pity that the servant girls—they changed frequently at Downe Lodge because they, too, were liars—might show. "You're just fit to row in the same boat with Black Sheep," was a sentiment that each new Jane or Eliza might expect to hear, before a month was over, from Aunty Rosa's lips; and Black Sheep was used to ask new girls whether they had yet been compared to him. Harry was "Master Harry" in their mouths; Judy was officially "Miss Judy"; but Black Sheep was never anything more than Black Sheep *tout court.*

As time went on and the memory of Papa and Mamma became wholly overlaid by the unpleasant task of writing them letters, under Aunty Rosa's eye, each Sunday, Black Sheep forgot what manner of life he had led in the beginning of things. Even Judy's appeals to "try and remember about Bombay" failed to quicken him.

"I can't remember," he said. "I know I used to give orders and Mamma kissed me."

"Aunty Rosa will kiss you if you are good," pleaded Judy.

"Ugh! I don't want to be kissed by Aunty Rosa. She'd say I was doing it to get something more to eat."

The weeks lengthened into months, and the holidays came; but just before the holidays Black Sheep fell into deadly sin.

Among the many boys whom Harry had incited to "punch Black Sheep's head because he daren't hit back," was one more aggravating than the rest, who, in an unlucky moment, fell upon Black Sheep when Harry was not near. The blows stung, and Black Sheep struck back at random with all the power at his command. The boy dropped and whimpered. Black Sheep was astounded at his own act, but, feeling the unresisting body under him, shook it with both his hands in blind fury and then began to throttle his enemy; meaning honestly to slay him. There was a scuffle, and Black Sheep was torn off the body by Harry and some colleagues, and cuffed home tingling but exultant. Aunty Rosa was out: pending her arrival, Harry sent himself to lecture Black Sheep on the sin of murder—which he described as the offence of Cain.

"Why didn't you fight him fair? What did you hit him when he was down for, you little cur?"

Black Sheep looked up at Harry's throat and then at a knife on the dinner-table.

"I don't understand," he said, wearily. "You always set him on me and told me I was a coward when I blubbed. Will you leave me alone until Aunty Rosa comes in? She'll beat me if you tell her I ought to be beaten; so it's all right."

"It's all wrong," said Harry, magisterially. "You nearly killed him, and I shouldn't wonder if he dies."

"Will he die?" said Black Sheep.

"I dare say," said Harry, "and then you'll be hanged."

"All right," said Black Sheep, possessing himself of the table-knife. "Then I'll kill you now. You say things and do things and . . . and *I* don't know how things happen, and you never leave me alone—and I don't care *what* happens!"

He ran at the boy with the knife, and Harry fled upstairs to his room, promising Black Sheep the finest thrashing in the world when Aunty Rosa returned. Black Sheep sat at the bottom of the stairs, the table-knife in his hand, and wept for that he had not killed Harry. The servant-girl came up from the kitchen, took the knife away, and consoled him. But Black Sheep was beyond consolation. He would be badly beaten by Aunty Rosa; then there would be another beating at Harry's hands; then Judy would not

be allowed to speak to him; then the tale would be told at school and then . . .

There was no one to help and no one to care, and the best way out of the business was by death. A knife would hurt, but Aunty Rosa had told him, a year ago, that if he sucked paint he would die. He went into the nursery, unearthed the now disused Noah's Ark, and sucked the paint off as many animals as remained. It tasted abominable, but he had licked Noah's Dove clean by the time Aunty Rosa and Judy returned. He went upstairs and greeted them with: "Please, Aunty Rosa, I believe I've nearly killed a boy at school, and I've tried to kill Harry, and when you've done all about God and Hell, will you beat me and get it over?"

The tale of the assault as told by Harry could only be explained on the ground of possession by the Devil. Wherefore Black Sheep was not only most excellently beaten, once by Aunty Rosa and once, when thoroughly cowed down, by Harry, but he was further prayed for at family prayers, together with Jane who had stolen a cold rissole from the pantry and snuffled audibly as her enormity was brought before the Throne of Grace. Black Sheep was sore and stiff but triumphant. He would die that very night and be rid of them all. No, he would ask for no forgiveness from Harry, and at bedtime

would stand no questioning at Harry's hands, even though addressed as "Young Cain."

"I've been beaten," said he, "and I've done other things. I don't care what I do. If you speak to me to-night, Harry, I'll get out and try to kill you. Now you can kill me if you like."

Harry took his bed into the spare-room, and Black Sheep lay down to die.

It may be that the makers of Noah's Arks know that their animals are likely to find their way into young mouths, and paint them accordingly. Certain it is that the common, weary next morning broke through the windows and found Black Sheep quite well and a good deal ashamed of himself, but richer by the knowledge that he could, in extremity, secure himself against Harry for the future.

When he descended to breakfast on the first day of the holidays, he was greeted with the news that Harry, Aunty Rosa, and Judy were going away to Brighton, while Black Sheep was to stay in the house with the servant. His latest outbreak suited Aunty Rosa's plans admirably. It gave her good excuse for leaving the extra boy behind. Papa in Bombay, who really seemed to know a young sinner's wants to the hour, sent, that week, a package of new books. And with these, and the society of Jane on board-wages, Black Sheep was left alone for a month.

The books lasted for ten days. They were eaten too quickly, in long gulps of four and twenty hours at a time. Then came days of doing absolutely nothing, of dreaming dreams and marching imaginary armies up and downstairs, of counting the number of banisters, and of measuring the length and breadth of every room in handspans—fifty down the side, thirty across, and fifty back again. Jane made many friends, and, after receiving Black Sheep's assurance that he would not tell of her absences, went out daily for long hours. Black Sheep would follow the rays of the sinking sun from the kitchen to the dining-room and thence upward to his own bed-room until all was grey dark, and he ran down to the kitchen fire and read by its light. He was happy in that he was left alone and could read as much as he pleased. But, later, he grew afraid of the shadows of window-curtains and the flapping of doors and the creaking of shutters. He went out into the garden, and the rustling of the laurel-bushes frightened him.

He was glad when they all returned—Aunty Rosa, Harry, and Judy—full of news, and Judy laden with gifts. Who could help loving loyal little Judy? In return for all her merry babblement, Black Sheep confided to her that the distance from the hall-door to the top of the first

landing was exactly one hundred and eighty-four handspans. He had found it out himself.

Then the old life recommenced; but with a difference, and a new sin. To his other iniquities Black Sheep had now added a phenomenal clumsiness—was as unfit to trust in action as he was in word. He himself could not account for spilling everything he touched, upsetting glasses as he put his hand out, and bumping his head against doors that were manifestly shut. There was a grey haze upon all his world, and it narrowed month by month, until at last it left Black Sheep almost alone with the flapping curtains that were so like ghosts, and the nameless terrors of broad daylight that were only coats on pegs after all.

Holidays came and holidays went and Black Sheep was taken to see many people whose faces were all exactly alike; was beaten when occasion demanded, and tortured by Harry on all possible occasions; but defended by Judy through good and evil report, though she hereby drew upon herself the wrath of Aunty Rosa.

The weeks were interminable and Papa and Mamma were clean forgotten. Harry had left school and was a clerk in a Banking-Office. Freed from his presence, Black Sheep resolved that he should no longer be deprived of his allowance of pleasure-reading. Consequently when he failed

at school he reported that all was well, and conceived a large contempt for Aunty Rosa as he saw how easy it was to deceive her. "She says I'm a little liar when I don't tell lies, and now I do, she doesn't know," thought Black Sheep. Aunty Rosa had credited him in the past with petty cunning and stratagem that had never entered into his head. By the light of the sordid knowledge that she had revealed to him he paid her back full tale. In a household where the most innocent of his motives, his natural yearning for a little affection, had been interpreted into a desire for more bread and jam or to ingratiate himself with strangers and so put Harry into the background, his work was easy. Aunty Rosa could penetrate certain kinds of hypocrisy, but not all. He set his child's wits against hers and was no more beaten. It grew monthly more and more of a trouble to read the school-books, and even the pages of the open-print story-books danced and were dim. So Black Sheep brooded in the shadows that fell about him and cut him off from the world, inventing horrible punishments for "dear Harry," or plotting another line of the tangled web of deception that he wrapped round Aunty Rosa.

Then the crash came and the cobwebs were broken. It was impossible to foresee everything. Aunty Rosa made personal inquiries as to Black

Sheep's progress and received information that startled her. Step by step, with a delight as keen as when she convicted an underfed housemaid of the theft of cold meats, she followed the trail of Black Sheep's delinquencies. For weeks and weeks, in order to escape banishment from the book-shelves, he had made a fool of Aunty Rosa, of Harry, of God, of all the world! Horrible, most horrible, and evidence of an utterly depraved mind.

Black Sheep counted the cost. "It will only be one big beating and then she'll put a card with 'Liar' on my back, same as she did before. Harry will whack me and pray for me, and she will pray for me at prayers and tell me I'm a Child of the Devil and give me hymns to learn. But I've done all my reading and she never knew. She'll say she knew all along. She's an old liar too," said he.

For three days Black Sheep was shut in his own bedroom—to prepare his heart. "That means two beatings. One at school and one here. *That* one will hurt most." And it fell even as he thought. He was thrashed at school before the Jews and the *hubshi*, for the heinous crime of bringing home false reports of progress. He was thrashed at home by Aunty Rosa on the same count, and then the placard was produced. Aunty Rosa stitched it between his

shoulders and bade him go for a walk with it upon him.

"If you make me do that," said Black Sheep, very quietly, "I shall burn this house down, and perhaps I'll kill you. I don't know whether I *can* kill you—you're so bony—but I'll try."

No punishment followed this blasphemy, though Black Sheep held himself ready to work his way to Aunty Rosa's withered throat, and grip there till he was beaten off. Perhaps Aunty Rosa was afraid, for Black Sheep, having reached the Nadir of Sin, bore himself with a new recklessness.

In the midst of all the trouble there came a visitor from over the seas to Downe Lodge, who knew Papa and Mamma, and was commissioned to see Punch and Judy. Black Sheep was sent to the drawing-room and charged into a solid tea-table laden with china.

"Gently, gently, little man," said the visitor, turning Black Sheep's face to the light, slowly. "What's that big bird on the palings?"

"What bird?" asked Black Sheep.

The visitor looked deep down into Black Sheep's eyes for half a minute, and then said, suddenly:—"Good God, the little chap's nearly blind!"

It was a most business-like visitor. He gave orders, on his own responsibility, that Black

Sheep was not to go to school or open a book until Mamma came home. "She'll be here in three weeks, as you know of course," said he, "and I'm Inverarity Sahib. I ushered you into this wicked world, young man, and a nice use you seem to have made of your time. You must do nothing whatever. Can you do that?"

"Yes," said Punch, in a dazed way. He had known that Mamma was coming. There was a chance, then, of another beating. Thank Heaven, Papa wasn't coming too. Aunty Rosa had said of late that he ought to be beaten by a man.

For the next three weeks Black Sheep was strictly allowed to do nothing. He spent his time in the old nursery looking at the broken toys, for all of which account must be rendered to Mamma. Aunty Rosa hit him over the hands if even a wooden boat were broken. But that sin was of small importance compared to the other revelations, so darkly hinted at by Aunty Rosa. "When your Mother comes, and hears what I have to tell her, she may appreciate you properly," she said, grimly, and mounted guard over Judy lest that small maiden should attempt to comfort her brother, to the peril of her own soul.

And Mamma came—in a four-wheeler and a flutter of tender excitement. Such a Mamma! She was young, frivolously young, and beautiful,

with delicately flushed cheeks, eyes that shone like stars, and a voice that needed no additional appeal of outstretched arms to draw little ones to her heart. Judy ran straight to her, but Black Sheep hesitated. Could this wonder be "showing off"? She would not put out her arms when she knew of his crimes. Meantime was it possible that by fondling she wanted to get anything out of Black Sheep? Only all his love and all his confidence; but that Black Sheep did not know. Aunty Rosa withdrew and left Mamma, kneeling between her children, half laughing, half crying, in the very hall where Punch and Judy had wept five years before.

"Well, chicks, do you remember me?"

"No," said Judy, frankly, "but I said 'God bless Papa and Mamma,' ev'vy night."

"A little," said Black Sheep. "Remember I wrote to you every week, anyhow. That isn't to show off, but 'cause of what comes afterward."

"What comes after! What should come after, my darling boy?" And she drew him to her again. He came awkwardly, with many angles. "Not used to petting," said the quick Mother-soul. "The girl is."

"She's too little to hurt any one," thought Black Sheep, "and if I said I'd kill her, she'd be afraid. I wonder what Aunty Rosa will tell."

There was a constrained late dinner, at the end

of which Mamma picked up Judy and put her to bed with endearments manifold. Faithless little Judy had shown her defection from Aunty Rosa already. And that lady resented it bitterly. Black Sheep rose to leave the room.

"Come and say good-night," said Aunty Rosa, offering a withered cheek.

"Huh!" said Black Sheep. "I never kiss you, and I'm not going to show off. Tell that woman what I've done, and see what she says."

Black Sheep climbed into bed feeling that he had lost Heaven after a glimpse through the gates. In half an hour "that woman" was bending over him. Black Sheep flung up his right arm. It wasn't fair to come and hit him in the dark. Even Aunty Rosa never tried that. But no blow followed.

"Are you showing of? I won't tell you anything more than Aunty Rosa has, and *she* doesn't know everything," said Black Sheep as clearly as he could for the arms round his neck.

"Oh my son—my little, little son! It was my fault—*my* fault, darling—and yet how could we help it? Forgive me, Punch." The voice died out in a broken whisper, and two hot tears fell on Black Sheep's forehead.

"Has she been making you cry too?" he asked. "You should see Jane cry. But you're nice, and Jane is a Born Liar—Aunty Rosa says so."

"Hush, Punch, hush! My boy, don't talk like that. Try to love me a little bit—a little bit. You don't know how I want it. Punch-*baba*, come back to me! I am your Mother—your own Mother—and never mind the rest. I know—yes, I know, dear. It doesn't matter now. Punch, won't you care for me a little?"

It is astonishing how much petting a big boy of ten can endure when he is quite sure that there is no one to laugh at him. Black Sheep had never been make much of before, and here was this beautiful woman treating him—Black Sheep, the Child of the Devil and the Inheritor of Undying Flame—as though he were a small God.

"I care for you a great deal, Mother dear," he whispered at last, "and I'm glad you've come back; but are you sure Aunty Rosa told you everything?"

"Everything. What *does* it matter? But"—the voice broke with a sob that was also laughter—"Punch, my poor, dear, half blind darling, don't you think it was a little foolish of you?"

No. "It saved a lickin'."

Mamma shuddered and slipped away in the darkness to write a long letter to Papa. Here is an extract:

. . . Judy is a dear, plump little prig who adores the woman, and wears with as much gravity as her religious opinions—only eight,

Jack!—a venerable horse hair-atrocity which she calls her Bustle! I have just burned it, and the child is asleep in my bed as I write. She will come to me at once. Punch I cannot quite understand. He is well nourished, but seems to have been worried into a system of small deceptions which the woman magnifies into deadly sins. Don't you recollect our own up-bringing, dear, when the Fear of the Lord was so often the beginning of falsehood? I shall win Punch to me before long. I am taking the children away into the country to get them to know me, and, on the whole, I am content, or shall be when you come home, dear boy, and then, thank God, we shall be all under one roof again at last!

Three months later, Punch, no longer Black Sheep, has discovered that he is the veritable owner of a real, live, lovely Mamma, who is also a sister, comforter, and friend, and that he must protect her till the Father comes home. Deception does not suit the part of a protector, and, when one can do anything without question, where is the use of deception?

"Mother would be awfully cross if you walked through that ditch," says Judy, continuing a conversation.

"Mother's never angry," says Punch. "She'd just say, 'You're a little *pagal*'; and that's not nice, but I'll show."

Punch walks through the ditch and mires him-

self to the knees. "Mother, dear," he shouts, "I'm just as dirty as I can pos-*sib*-ly be!"

"Then change your clothes as quickly as you pos-*sib*-ly can!" rings out Mother's clear voice from the house. "And don't be a little *pagal!*"

"There! Told you so," says Punch. "It's all different now, and we are just as much Mother's as if she had never gone."

Not altogether, O Punch, for when young lips have drunk deep of the bitter waters of Hate, Suspicion, and Despair, all the Love in the world will not wholly take away that knowledge; though it may turn darkened eyes for a while tc the light, and teach Faith where no Faith was.

HIS MAJESTY THE KING

HIS MAJESTY THE KING

"Where the word of a King is, there is power: And who may say unto him—What doest thou?"

"YETH! And Chimo to sleep at ve foot of ve bed, and ve pink pikky-book, and ve bwead—'cause I will be hungwy in ve night—and vat's all, Miss Biddums. And now give me one kiss and I'll go to sleep.—So! Kite quiet. Ow! Ve pink pikky-book has slidded under ve pillow and ve bwead is cwumbling! Miss Biddums! Miss *Bid*dums! I'm *so* uncomfy! Come and tuck me up, Miss Biddums."

His Majesty the King was going to bed; and poor, patient Miss Biddums, who had advertised herself humbly as a "young person, European, accustomed to the care of little children," was forced to wait upon his royal caprices. The going to bed was always a lengthy process, because His Majesty had a convenient knack of forgetting which of his many friends, from the *mehter's* son to the Commissioner's daughter, he had prayed for, and, lest the Deity should take offence, was used to toil through his little prayers, in all reverence, five times in one evening. His Majesty the King believed in the efficacy of

prayer as devoutly as he believed in Chimo the patient spaniel, or Miss Biddums, who could reach him down his gun—"with cursuffun caps —*reel* ones"—from the upper shelves of the big nursery cupboard.

At the door of the nursery his authority stopped. Beyond lay the empire of his father and mother —two very terrible people who had no time to waste upon His Majesty the King. His voice was lowered when he passed the frontier of his own dominions, his actions were fettered, and his soul was filled with awe because of the grim man who lived among a wilderness of pigeon-holes and the most fascinating pieces of red tape, and the wonderful woman who was always getting into or stepping out of the big carriage.

To the one belonged the mysteries of the "*duftar*-room"; to the other the great, reflected wilderness of the "Memsahib's room" where the shiny, scented dresses hung on pegs, miles and miles up in the air, and the just-seen plateau of the toilet-table revealed an acreage of speckly combs, broidered "hanafitch bags," and "white-headed" brushes.

There was no room for His Majesty the King either in official reserve or mundane gorgeousness. He had discovered that, ages and ages ago—before even Chimo came to the house, or Miss Biddums had ceased grizzling over a packet of greasy

letters which appeared to be her chief treasure on earth. His Majesty the King, therefore, wisely confined himself to his own territories, where only Miss Biddums, and she feebly, disputed his sway.

From Miss Biddums he had picked up his simple theology and welded it to the legends of gods and devils that he had learned in the servants' quarters.

To Miss Biddum he confided with equal trust his tattered garments and his more serious griefs. She would make everything whole. She knew exactly how the Earth had been born, and had reassured the trembling soul of His Majesty the King that terrible time in July when it rained continuously for seven days and seven nights, and—there was no Ark ready and all the ravens had flown away! She was the most powerful person with whom he was brought into contact—always excepting the two remote and silent people beyond the nursery door.

How was His Majesty the King to know that, six years ago, in the summer of his birth, Mrs. Austell, turning over her husband's papers, had come upon the intemperate letter of a foolish woman who had been carried away by the silent man's strength and personal beauty? How could he tell what evil the overlooked slip of note-paper had wrought in the mind of a desperately jealous

wife? How could he, despite his wisdom, guess that his mother had chosen to make of it excuse for a bar and a division between herself and her husband, that strengthened and grew harder to break with each year; that she, having unearthed this skeleton in the cupboard, had trained it into a household God which should be about their path and about their bed, and poison all their ways?

These things were beyond the province of His Majesty the King. He only knew that his father was daily absorbed in some mysterious work for a thing called the *Sirkar* and that his mother was the victim alternately of the *Nautch* and the *Burrakhana*. To these entertainments she was escorted by a Captain-Man for whom His Majesty the King had no regard.

"He *doesn't* laugh," he argued with Miss Biddums, who would fain have taught him charity. "He only makes faces wiv his mouf, and when he wants to o-muse me I am *not* o-mused." And His Majesty the King shook his head as one who knew the deceitfulness of this world.

Morning and evening it was his duty to salute his father and mother—the former with a grave shake of the hand, and the latter with an equally grave kiss. Once, indeed, he had put his arms round his mother's neck, in the fashion he used toward Miss Biddums. The openwork of his

sleeve-edge caught in an earring, and the last stage of His Majesty's little overture was a suppressed scream and summary dismissal to the nursery.

"It's w'ong," thought His Majesty the King, "to hug Memsahibs wiv fings in veir ears. I will amember." He never repeated the experiment.

Miss Biddums, it must be confessed, spoiled him as much as his nature admitted, in some sort of recompense for what she called "the hard ways of his Papa and Mamma." She, like her charge, knew nothing of the trouble between man and wife—the savage contempt for a woman's stupidity on the one side, or the dull, rankling anger on the other. Miss Biddums had looked after many little children in her time, and served in many establishments. Being a discreet woman, she observed little and said less, and, when her pupils went over the sea to the Great Unknown which she, with touching confidence in her hearers, called "Home," packed up her slender belongings and sought for employment afresh, lavishing all her love on each successive batch of ingrates. Only His Majesty the King had repaid her affection with interest; and in his uncomprehending ears she had told the tale of nearly all her hopes, her aspirations, the hopes that were dead, and the dazzling glories of her ancestral home in "*Cal*cutta, close to Wellington Square."

Everything above the average was in the eyes of His Majesty the King "Calcutta good." When Miss Biddums had crossed his royal will, he reversed the epithet to vex that estimable lady, and all things evil were, until the tears of repentance swept away spite, "Calcutta bad."

Now and again Miss Biddums begged for him the rare pleasure of a day in the society of the Commissioner's child—the wilful four-year-old Patsie, who, to the intense amazement of His Majesty the King, was idolized by her parents. On thinking the question out at length, by roads unknown to those who have left childhood behind, he came to the conclusion that Patsie was petted because she wore a big blue sash and yellow hair.

This precious discovery he kept to himself. The yellow hair was absolutely beyond his power, his own tousled wig being potato-brown; but something might be done toward the blue sash. He tied a large knot in his mosquito-curtains in order to remember to consult Patsie on their next meeting. She was the only child he had ever spoken to, and almost the only one that he had ever seen. The little memory and the very large and ragged knot held good.

"Patsie, lend me your blue wiband," said His Majesty the King.

"You'll bewy it," said Patsie, doubtfully,

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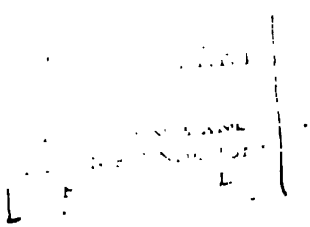
His Majesty the King and Patsie.



mindful of certain fearful atrocities committed on her doll.

"No, I won't—twoofanhonor. It's for me to wear."

"Pooh!" said Patsie. "Boys don't wear sa-ashes. Zey's only for dirls."

"I didn't know." The face of His Majesty the King fell.

"Who wants ribands? Are you playing horses, chickabiddies?" said the Commissioner's wife, stepping into the veranda.

"Toby wanted my sash," explained Patsie.

"I don't now," said His Majesty the King, hastily, feeling that with one of these terrible "grown-ups" his poor little secret would be shamelessly wrenched from him, and perhaps —most burning desecration of all—laughed at.

"I'll give you a cracker-cap," said the Commissioner's wife. "Come along with me, Toby, and we'll choose it."

The cracker-cap was a stiff, three-pointed vermilion-and-tinsel splendor. His Majesty the King fitted it on his royal brow. The Commissioner's wife had a face that children instinctively trusted, and her action, as she adjusted the toppling middle spike, was tender.

"Will it do as well?" stammered His Majesty the King.

"As what, little one?"

"As ve wiban?"

"Oh, quite. Go and look at yourself in the glass."

The words were spoken in all sincerity and to help forward any absurd "dressing-up" amusement that the children might take into their minds. But the young savage has a keen sense of the ludicrous. His Majesty the King swung the great cheval-glass down, and saw his head crowned with the staring horror of a fool's cap—a thing which his father would rend to pieces if it ever came into his office. He plucked it off, and burst into tears.

"Toby," said the Commissioner's wife, gravely, "you shouldn't give way to temper. I am very sorry to see it. It's wrong."

His Majesty the King sobbed inconsolably, and the heart of Patsie's mother was touched. She drew the child on to her knee. Clearly it was not temper alone.

"What is it, Toby? Won't you tell me? Aren't you well?"

The torrent of sobs and speech met, and fought for a time, with chokings and gulpings and gasps. Then, in a sudden rush, His Majesty the King was delivered of a few inarticulate sounds, followed by the words:—"Go a—way you—dirty—little debbil!"

"Toby! What do you mean?"

"It's what he'd say. I *know* it is! He said vat when vere was only a little, little eggy mess, on my t-t-unic; and he'd say it again, and laugh, if I went in wif vat on my head."

"Who would say that?"

"M-m-my Papa! And I fought if I had ve blue wiban, he'd let me play in ve waste-paper basket under ve table."

"*What* blue riband, childie?"

"Ve same vat Patsie had—ve big blue wiban w-w-wound my t-ttummy!"

"What is it, Toby? There's something on your mind. Tell me all about it, and perhaps I can help."

"Isn't anyfing," sniffed His Majesty, mindful of his manhood, and raising his head from the motherly bosom upon which it was resting. "I only fought vat you—you petted Patsie 'cause she had ve blue wiban, and—and if I'd had ve blue wiban too, m-my Papa w-would pet me."

The secret was out, and His Majesty the King sobbed bitterly in spite of the arms round him, and the murmur of comfort on his heated little forehead.

Enter Patsie tumultuously, embarrassed by several lengths of the Commissioner's pet *makseer*-rod. "Tum along, Toby! Zere's a *chu-chu* lizard in *ze chick*, and I've told Chimo to

watch him till we tum. If we poke him wiz zis his tail will go *wiggle-wiggle* and fall off. Tum along! I can't weach."

"I'm comin'," said His Majesty the King, climbing down from the Commissioner's wife's knee after a hasty kiss.

Two minutes later, the *chu-chu* lizard's tail was wriggling on the matting of the veranda, and the children were gravely poking it with splinters from the *chick*, to urge its exhausted vitality into "just one wiggle more, 'cause it doesn't hurt *chu-chu*."

The Commissioner's wife stood in the doorway and watched:—"Poor little mite! A blue sash . . . and my own precious Patsie! I wonder if the best of us, or we who love them best, ever understand what goes on in their topsy-turvy little heads."

A big tear splashed on the Commissioner's wife's wedding-ring, and she went indoors to devise a tea for the benefit of His Majesty the King.

"Their souls aren't in their tummies at that age in this climate," said the Commissioner's wife, "but they are not far off. I wonder if I could make Mrs. Austell understand. Poor little fellow!"

With simple craft, the Commissioner's wife called on Mrs. Austell and spoke long and lov-

ingly about children; inquiring specially for His Majesty the King.

"He's with his governess," said Mrs. Austell, and the tone intimated that she was not interested.

The Commissioner's wife, unskilled in the art of war, continued her questionings. "I don't know," said Mrs. Austell. "These things are left to Miss Biddums, and, of course, she does not ill-treat the child."

The Commissioner's wife left hastily. The last sentence jarred upon her nerves. "Doesn't *ill-treat* the child! As if that were all! I wonder what Tom would say if I only 'didn't ill-treat' Patsie!"

Thenceforward, His Majesty the King was an honored guest at the Commissioner's house, and the chosen friend of Patsie, with whom he blundered into as many scrapes as the compound and the servants' quarters afforded. Patsie's Mamma was always ready to give counsel, help, and sympathy, and, if need were and callers few, to enter into their games with an *abandon* that would have shocked the sleek-haired subalterns who squirmed painfully in their chairs when they came to call on her whom they profanely nicknamed "Mother Bunch."

Yet, in spite of Patsie and Patsie's Mamma, and the love that these two lavished upon him,

His Majesty the King fell grievously from grace, and committed no less a sin than that of theft—unknown, it is true, but burdensome.

There came a man to the door one day, when His Majesty was playing in the hall and the bearer had gone to dinner, with a packet for his Majesty's Mamma. And he put it upon the hall-table, said that there was no answer, and departed.

Presently, the pattern of the dado ceased to interest His Majesty, while the packet, a white, neatly wrapped one of fascinating shape, interested him very much indeed. His Mamma was out, so was Miss Biddums, and there was pink string round the packet. He greatly desired pink string. It would help him in many of his little businesses—the haulage across the floor of his small cane-chair, the torturing of Chimo, who could never understand harness—and so forth. If he took the string it would be his own, and nobody would be any the wiser. He certainly could not pluck up sufficient courage to ask Mamma for it. Wherefore, mounting upon a chair, he carefully untied the string and, behold, the stiff white paper spread out in four directions, and revealed a beautiful little leather box with gold lines upon it! He tried to replace the string, but that was a failure. So he opened the box to get full satisfaction for his iniquity, and

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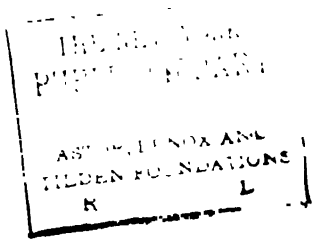
"His Majesty the King was arguing against his conscience."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saw a most beautiful Star that shone and winked, and was altogether lovely and desirable.

"Vat," said His Majesty, meditatively, "is a 'parkle cwown, like what I will wear when I go to heaven. I will wear it on my head—Miss Biddums says so. I would like to wear it *now*. I would like to play wiv it. I will take it away and play wiv it, very careful, until Mamma asks for it. I fink it was bought for me to play wiv —same as my cart."

His Majesty the King was arguing against his conscience, and he knew it, for he thought immediately after: "Never mind. I will keep it to play wiv until Mamma says where is it, and then I will say:—'I tookt it and I am sorry.' I will not hurt it because it is a 'parkle cwown. But Miss Biddums will tell me to put it back. I will not show it to Miss Biddums."

If Mamma had come in at that moment all would have gone well. She did not, and His Majesty the King stuffed paper, case, and jewel into the breast of his blouse and marched to the nursery.

"When Mamma asks I will tell," was the salve that he laid upon his conscience. But Mamma never asked, and for three whole days His Majesty the King gloated over his treasure. It was of no earthly use to him, but it was splendid, and, for aught he knew, something dropped from the

heavens themselves. Still Mamma made no inquiries, and it seemed to him, in his furtive peeps, as though the shiny stones grew dim. What was the use of a 'parkle cwown if it made a little boy feel all bad in his inside? He had the pink string as well as the other treasure, but greatly he wished that he had not gone beyond the string. It was his first experience of iniquity, and it pained him after the flush of possession and secret delight in the "'parkle cwown" had died away.

Each day that he delayed rendered confession to the people beyond the nursery doors more impossible. Now and again he determined to put himself in the path of the beautifully attired lady as she was going out, and explain that he and no one else was the possessor of a "'parkle cwown," most beautiful and quite uninquired for. But she passed hurriedly to her carriage, and the opportunity was gone before His Majesty the King could draw the deep breath which clinches noble resolve. The dread secret cut him off from Miss Biddums, Patsie, and the Commissioner's wife, and—doubly hard fate—when he brooded over it Patsie said, and told her mother, that he was cross.

The days were very long to His Majesty the King, and the nights longer still. Miss Biddums had informed him, more than once, what was

the ultimate destiny of "fieves," and when he passed the interminable mud flanks of the Central Jail, he shook in his little strapped shoes.

But release came after an afternoon spent in playing boats by the edge of the tank at the bottom of the garden. His Majesty the King went to tea, and, for the first time in his memory, the meal revolted him. His nose was very cold, and his cheeks were burning hot. There was a weight about his feet, and he pressed his head several times to make sure that it was not swelling as he sat.

"I feel vevy funny," said His Majesty the King, rubbing his nose. "Vere's a buzz-buzz in my head."

He went to bed quietly. Miss Biddums was out and the bearer undressed him.

The sin of the "'parkle cwown" was forgotten in the acuteness of the discomfort to which he roused after a leaden sleep of some hours. He was thirsty, and the bearer had forgotten to leave the drinking-water. "Miss Biddums! Miss Biddums! I'm so kirsty!"

No answer. Miss Biddums had leave to attend the wedding of a Calcutta schoolmate. His Majesty the King had forgotten that.

"I want a dwink of water!" he cried, but his voice was dried up in his throat. "I want a dwink! Vere is ve glass?"

He sat up in bed and looked round. There was a murmur of voices from the other side of the nursery door. It was better to face the terrible unknown than to choke in the dark. He slipped out of bed, but his feet were strangely wilful, and he reeled once or twice. Then he pushed the door open and staggered—a puffed and purple-faced little figure—into the brilliant light of the dining-room full of pretty ladies.

"I'm vevy hot! I'm vevy uncomfitivle," moaned His Majesty the King, clinging to the portière, "and vere's no water in ve glass, and I'm *so* kirsty. Give me a dwink of water."

An apparition in black and white—His Majesty the King could hardly see distinctly—lifted him up to the level of the table, and felt his wrists and forehead. The water came, and he drank deeply, his teeth chattering against the edge of the tumbler. Then every one seemed to go away—every one except the huge man in black and white, who carried him back to his bed; the mother and father following. And the sin of the "'parkle cwown" rushed back and took possession of the terrified soul.

"I'm a fief!" he gasped. "I want to tell Miss Biddums vat I'm a fief. Vere is Miss Biddums?"

Miss Biddums had come and was bending over him. "I'm a fief," he whispered. "A fief—

like ve men in the pwison. But I'll tell now. I tookt . . . I tookt ve 'parkle cwown when the man that came left it in ve hall. I bwoke ve paper and ve little bwown box, and it looked shiny, and I tookt it to play wif, and I was afwaid. It's in ve dooly-box at ve bottom. No one *never* asked for it, but I was afwaid. Oh, go an' get ve dooly-box!"

Miss Biddums obediently stooped to the lowest shelf of the *almirah* and unearthed the big paper box in which His Majesty the King kept his dearest possessions. Under the tin soldiers, and a layer of mud pellets for a pellet-bow, winked and blazed a diamond star, wrapped roughly in a half-sheet of note-paper whereon were a few words.

Somebody was crying at the head of the bed, and a man's hand touched the forehead of His Majesty the King, who grasped the packet and spread it on the bed.

"Vat is ve 'parkle cwown," he said, and wept bitterly; for now that he had made restitution he would fain have kept the shining splendor with him.

"It concerns you too," said a voice at the head of the bed. "Read the note. This is not the time to keep back anything."

The note was curt, very much to the point, and signed by a single initial. "*If you wear this*

to-morrow night I shall know what to expect." The date was three weeks old.

A whisper followed, and the deeper voice returned: "And you drifted as far apart as *that!* I think it makes us quits now, doesn't it? Oh, can't we drop this folly once and for all? Is it worth it, darling?"

"Kiss me too," said His Majesty the King, dreamily. "You isn't *vevy* angwy, is you?"

The fever burned itself out, and His Majesty the King slept.

When he waked, it was in a new world—peopled by his father and mother as well as Miss Biddums: and there was much love in that world and no morsel of fear, and more petting than was good for several little boys. His Majesty the King was too young to moralize on the uncertainty of things human, or he would have been impressed with the singular advantages of crime—ay, black sin. Behold, he had stolen the "'parkle cwown," and his reward was Love, and the right to play in the waste-paper basket under the table "for always."

* * * * * *

He trotted over to spend an afternoon with Patsie, and the Commissioner's wife would have kissed him. "No, not vere," said His Majesty the King, with superb insolence, fencing one

corner of his mouth with his hand. "Vat's my Mamma's place—vere *she* kisses me."

"Oh!" said the Commissioner's wife, briefly. Then to herself: "Well, I suppose I ought to be glad for his sake. Children are selfish little grubs and—I've got my Patsie."

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THE DRUMS OF THE FORE AND AFT

THE DRUMS OF THE FORE AND AFT

"And a little child shall lead them."

IN the Army List they still stand as "The Fore and Fit Princess Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen-Auspach's Merther-Tydfilshire Own Royal Loyal Light Infantry, Regimental District 329A," but the Army through all its barracks and canteens knows them now as the "Fore and Aft." They may in time do something that shall make their new title honorable, but at present they are bitterly ashamed, and the man who calls them "Fore and Aft" does so at the risk of the head which is on his shoulders.

Two words breathed into the stables of a certain Cavalry Regiment will bring the men out into the streets with belts and mops and bad language; but a whisper of "Fore and Aft" will bring out this regiment with rifles.

Their one excuse is that they came again and did their best to finish the job in style. But for a time all their world knows that they were openly beaten, whipped, dumb-cowed, shaking and afraid. The men know it; their officers know it; the Horse Guards know it, and when

the next war comes the enemy will know it also. There are two or three regiments of the Line that have a black mark against their names which they will then wipe out, and it will be excessively inconvenient for the troops upon whom they do their wiping.

The courage of the British soldier is officially supposed to be above proof, and, as a general rule, it is so. The exceptions are decently shoveled out of sight, only to be referred to in the freshet of unguarded talk that occasionally swamps a Mess-table at midnight. Then one hears strange and horrible stories of men not following their officers, of orders being given by those who had no right to give them, and of disgrace that, but for the standing luck of the British Army, might have ended in brilliant disaster. These are unpleasant stories to listen to, and the Messes tell them under their breath, sitting by the big wood fires, and the young officer bows his head and thinks to himself, please God, his men shall never behave unhandily.

The British soldier is not altogether to be blamed for occasional lapses; but this verdict he should not know. A moderately intelligent General will waste six months in mastering the craft of the particular war that he may be waging; a Colonel may utterly misunderstand the capacity of his regiment for three months

after it has taken the field; and even a Company Commander may err and be deceived as to the temper and temperament of his own handful: wherefore the soldier, and the soldier of to-day more particularly, should not be blamed for falling back. He should be shot or hanged afterward—*pour encourager les autres;* but he should not be vilified in newspapers, for that is want of tact and waste of space.

He has, let us say, been in the service of the Empress for, perhaps, four years. He will leave in another two years. He has no inherited morals, and four years are not sufficient to drive toughness into his fibre, or to teach him how holy a thing is his Regiment. He wants to drink, he wants to enjoy himself—in India he wants to save money—and he does not in the least like getting hurt. He has received just sufficient education to make him understand half the purport of the orders he receives, and to speculate on the nature of clean, incised, and shattering wounds. Thus, if he is told to deploy under fire preparatory to an attack, he knows that he runs a very great risk of being killed while he is deploying, and suspects that he is being thrown away to gain ten minutes' time. He may either deploy with desperate swiftness, or he may shuffle, or bunch, or break, according to the discipline under which he has lain for four years.

Armed with imperfect knowledge, cursed with the rudiments of an imagination, hampered by the intense selfishness of the lower classes, and unsupported by any regimental associations, this young man is suddenly introduced to an enemy who in eastern lands is always ugly, generally tall and hairy, and frequently noisy. If he looks to the right and the left and sees old soldiers—men of twelve years' service, who, he knows, know what they are about—taking a charge, rush, or demonstration without embarrassment, he is consoled and applies his shoulder to the butt of his rifle with a stout heart. His peace is the greater if he hears a senior, who has taught him his soldiering and broken his head on occasion, whispering:—"They'll shout and carry on like this for five minutes. Then they'll rush in, and then we've got 'em by the short hairs!"

But, on the other hand, if he sees only men of his own term of service, turning white and playing with their triggers and saying:—"What the Hell's up now?" while the Company Commanders are sweating into their sword-hilts and shouting:—"Front-rank, fix bayonets. Steady there—steady! Sight for three hundred—no, for five! Lie down, all! Steady! Front-rank, kneel!" and so forth, he becomes unhappy; and grows acutely miserable when he hears a comrade turn over with the rattle of fire-irons falling into the

fender, and the grunt of a pole-axed ox. If he can be moved about a little and allowed to watch the effect of his own fire on the enemy he feels merrier, and may be then worked up to the blind passion of fighting, which is, contrary to general belief, controlled by a chilly Devil and shakes men like ague. If he is not moved about, and begins to feel cold at the pit of the stomach, and in that crisis is badly mauled and hears orders that were never given, he will break, and he will break badly; and of all things under the sight of the Sun there is nothing more terrible than a broken British regiment. When the worst comes to the worst and the panic is really epidemic, the men must be e'en let go, and the Company Commanders had better escape to the enemy and stay there for safety's sake. If they can be made to come again they are not pleasant men to meet, because they will not break twice.

About thirty years from this date, when we have succeeded in half-educating everything that wears trousers, our Army will be a beautifully unreliable machine. It will know too much and it will do too little. Later still, when all men are at the mental level of the officer of to-day it will sweep the earth. Speaking roughly, you must employ either blackguards or gentlemen, or, best of all, blackguards commanded by gentlemen, to do butcher's work with efficiency

and despatch. The ideal soldier should, of course, think for himself—the *Pocketbook* says so. Unfortunately, to attain this virtue, he has to pass through the phase of thinking of himself, and that is misdirected genius. A blackguard may be slow to think for himself, but he is genuinely anxious to kill, and a little punishment teaches him how to guard his own skin and perforate another's. A powerfully prayerful Highland Regiment, officered by rank Presbyterians, is, perhaps, one degree more terrible in action than a hard-bitten thousand of irresponsible Irish ruffians led by most improper young unbelievers. But these things prove the rule—which is that the midway men are not to be trusted alone. They have ideas about the value of life and an upbringing that has not taught them to go on and take the chances. They are carefully unprovided with a backing of comrades who have been shot over, and until that backing is re-introduced, as a great many Regimental Commanders intend it shall be, they are more liable to disgrace themselves than the size of the Empire or the dignity of the Army allows. Their officers are as good as good can be, because their training begins early, and God has arranged that a clean-run youth of the British middle classes shall, in the matter of backbone, brains, and bowels, surpass all other youths. For this reason a child of

eighteen will stand up, doing nothing, with a tin sword in his hand and joy in his heart until he is dropped. If he dies, he dies like a gentleman. If he lives, he writes Home that he has been "potted," "sniped," "chipped" or "cut over," and sits down to besiege Government for a wound-gratuity until the next little war breaks out, when he perjures himself before a Medical Board, blarneys his Colonel, burns incense round his Adjutant, and is allowed to go to the Front once more.

Which homily brings me directly to a brace of the most finished little fiends that ever banged drum or tootled fife in the Band of a British Regiment. They ended their sinful career by open and flagrant mutiny and were shot for it. Their names were Jakin and Lew—Piggy Lew—and they were bold, bad drummer-boys, both of them frequently birched by the Drum-Major of the Fore and Aft.

Jakin was a stunted child of fourteen, and Lew was about the same age. When not looked after, they smoked and drank. They swore habitually after the manner of the Barrack-room, which is cold-swearing and comes from between clinched teeth; and they fought religiously once a week. Jakin had sprung from some London gutter and may or may not have passed through Dr. Barnado's hands ere he arrived at the dignity of

drummer-boy. Lew could remember nothing except the regiment and the delight of listening to the Band from his earliest years. He hid somewhere in his grimy little soul a genuine love for music, and was most mistakenly furnished with the head of a cherub: insomuch that beautiful ladies who watched the Regiment in church were wont to speak of him as a "darling." They never heard his vitriolic comments on their manners and morals, as he walked back to barracks with the Band and matured fresh causes of offence against Jakin.

The other drummer-boys hated both lads on account of their illogical conduct. Jakin might be pounding Lew, or Lew might be rubbing Jakin's head in the dirt, but any attempt at aggression on the part of an outsider was met by the combined forces of Lew and Jakin; and the consequences were painful. The boys were the Ishmaels of the corps, but wealthy Ishmaels, for they sold battles in alternate weeks for the sport of the barracks when they were not pitted against other boys; and thus amassed money.

On this particular day there was dissension in the camp. They had just been convicted afresh of smoking, which is bad for little boys who use plug-tobacco, and Lew's contention was that Jakin had "stunk so 'orrid bad from keepin' the pipe in pocket," that he and he alone was re-

sponsible for the birching they were both tingling under.

"I tell you I 'id the pipe back o' barricks," said Jakin, pacifically.

"You're a bloomin' liar," said Lew, without heat.

"You're a bloomin' little barstard," said Jakin, strong in the knowledge that his own ancestry was unknown.

Now there is one word in the extended vocabulary of barrack-room abuse that cannot pass without comment. You may call a man a thief and risk nothing. You may even call him a coward without finding more than a boot whiz past your ear, but you must not call a man a bastard unless you are prepared to prove it on his front teeth.

"You might ha' kep' that till I wasn't so sore," said Lew, sorrowfully, dodging round Jakin's guard.

"I'll make you sorer," said Jakin, genially, and got home on Lew's alabaster forehead. All would have gone well and this story, as the books say, would never have been written, had not his evil fate prompted the Bazar-Sergeant's son, a long, employless man of five and twenty, to put in an appearance after the first round. He was eternally in need of money, and knew that the boys had silver.

"Fighting again," said he. "I'll report you to my father, and he'll report you to the Color-Sergeant."

"What's that to you?" said Jakin, with an unpleasant dilation of the nostrils.

"Oh! nothing to *me*. You'll get into trouble, and you've been up too often to afford that."

"What the Hell do you know about what we've done?" asked Lew the Seraph. "*You* aren't in the Army, you lousy, cadging civilian."

He closed in on the man's left flank.

"Jes' 'cause you find two gentlemen settlin' their diff'rences with their fistes you stick in your ugly nose where you aren't wanted. Run 'ome to your 'arf-caste slut of a Ma—or we'll give you what-for," said Jakin.

The man attempted reprisals by knocking the boys' heads together. The scheme would have succeeded had not Jakin punched him vehemently in the stomach, or had Lew refrained from kicking his shins. They fought together, bleeding and breathless, for half an hour, and after heavy punishment, triumphantly pulled down their opponent as terriers pull down a jackal.

"Now," gasped Jakin, "I'll give you what-for." He proceeded to pound the man's features while Lew stamped on the outlying portions of his anatomy. Chivalry is not a strong point in the composition of the average drummer-

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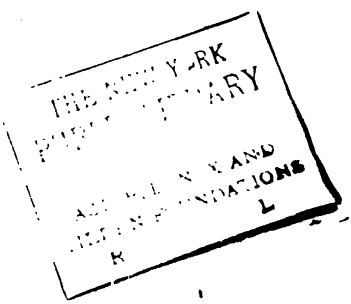
The bazar-sergeant's son.



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boy. He fights, as do his betters, to make his mark.

Ghastly was the ruin that escaped, and awful was the wrath of the Bazar-Sergeant. Awful too was the scene in Orderly-room when the two reprobates appeared to answer the charge of half-murdering a "civilian." The Bazar-Sergeant thirsted for a criminal action, and his son lied. The boys stood to attention while the black clouds of evidence accumulated.

"You little devils are more trouble than the rest of the Regiment put together," said the Colonel, angrily. "One might as well admonish thistledown, and I can't well put you in cells or under stoppages. You must be flogged again."

"Beg y' pardon, Sir. Can't we say nothin' in our own defence, Sir?" shrilled Jakin.

"Hey! What? Are you going to argue with me?" said the Colonel.

"No, Sir," said Lew. "But if a man come to you, Sir, and said he was going to report you, Sir, for 'aving a bit of a turn-up with a friend, Sir, an' wanted to get money out o' *you*, Sir"—

The Orderly-room exploded in a roar of laughter. "Well?" said the Colonel.

"That was what that measly *jarnwar* there did, Sir, and 'e'd 'a' *done* it, Sir, if we 'adn't prevented 'im. We didn't 'it 'im much, Sir. 'E 'adn't no manner o' right to interfere with us, Sir. I don't

l, quite. I'll be a orf'cer too. There's nothin' like taking to a thing an' stickin' to it, the Schoolmaster says. The reg'ment don't go 'ome for another seven years. I'll be a Lance then or near to."

Thus the boys discussed their futures, and conducted themselves with exemplary piety for a week. That is to say, Lew started a flirtation with the Color-Sergeant's daughter, aged thirteen, —"not," as he explained to Jakin, "with any intention o' matrimony, but by way o' keepin' my 'and in." And the black-haired Cris Delighan enjoyed that flirtation more than previous ones, and the other drummer-boys raged furiously together, and Jakin preached sermons on the dangers of "bein' tangled along o' petticoats."

But neither love nor virtue would have held Lew long in the paths of propriety had not the rumor gone abroad that the Regiment was to be sent on active service, to take part in a war which, for the sake of brevity, we will call "The War of the Lost Tribes."

The barracks had the rumor almost before the Mess-room, and of all the nine hundred men in barracks not ten had seen a shot fired in anger. The Colonel had, twenty years ago, assisted at a Frontier expedition; one of the Majors had seen service at the Cape; a confirmed deserter in E Company had helped to clear streets in Ireland;

but that was all. The Regiment had been put by for many years. The overwhelming mass of its rank and file had from three to four years' service; the non-commissioned officers were under thirty years old; and men and sergeants alike had forgotten to speak of the stories written in brief upon the Colors—the New Colors that had been formally blessed by an Archbishop in England ere the Regiment came away.

They wanted to go to the Front—they were enthusiastically anxious to go—but they had no knowledge of what war meant, and there was none to tell them. They were an educated regiment, the percentage of school-certificates in their ranks was high, and most of the men could do more than read and write. They had been recruited in loyal observance of the territorial idea; but they themselves had no notion of that idea. They were made up of drafts from an overpopulated manufacturing district. The system had put flesh and muscle upon their small bones, but it could not put heart into the sons of those who for generations had done overmuch work for overscanty pay, had sweated in drying-rooms, stooped over looms, coughed among white-lead and shivered on lime-barges. The men had found food and rest in the Army, and now they were going to fight "niggers"—people who ran away if you shook a stick at them.

Wherefore they cheered lustily when the rumor ran, and the shrewd, clerkly non-commissioned officers speculated on the chances of batta and of saving their pay. At Headquarters, men said:—"The Fore and Fit have never been under fire within the last generation. Let us, therefore, break them in easily by setting them to guard lines of communication." And this would have been done but for the fact that British Regiments were wanted—badly wanted—at the Front, and there were doubtful Native Regiments that could fill the minor duties. "Brigade 'em with two strong Regiments," said Headquarters. "They may be knocked about a bit, but they'll learn their business before they come through. Nothing like a night-alarm and a little cutting-up of stragglers to make a Regiment smart in the field. Wait till they've had half a dozen sentries' throats cut."

The Colonel wrote with delight that the temper of his men was excellent, that the Regiment was all that could be wished and as sound as a bell. The Majors smiled with a sober joy, and the subalterns waltzed in pairs down the Mess-room after dinner and nearly shot themselves at revolver practice. But there was consternation in the hearts of Jakin and Lew. What was to be done with the drums? Would the Band go to the Front? How many of the drums would accompany the Regiment?

They took council together, sitting in a tree and smoking.

"It's more than a bloomin' toss-up they'll leave us be'ind at the Depôt with the women. You'll like that," said Jakin, sarcastically.

"'Cause o' Cris, y' mean? Wot's a woman, or a 'ole bloomin' depôt o' women, 'longside o' the chanst of field-service? You know I'm as keen on goin' as you," said Lew.

"'Wish I was a bloomin' bugler," said Jakin, sadly. "They'll take Tom Kidd along, that I can plaster a wall with, an' like as not they won't take us."

"Then let's go an' make Tom Kidd so bloomin' sick 'e can't bugle no more. You 'old 'is 'ands an' I'll kick him," said Lew, wriggling on the branch.

"That ain't no good neither. We ain't the sort o' characters to presoon on our rep'tations—they're bad. If they have the Band at the Depôt we don't go, and no error *there*. If they take the Band we may get cast for medical unfitness. Are you medical fit, Piggy?" said Jakin, digging Lew in the ribs with force.

"Yus," said Lew, with an oath. "The Doctor says your 'eart's weak through smokin' on an empty stummick. Throw a chest an' I'll try yer."

Jakin threw out his chest, which Lew smote

with all his might. Jakin turned very pale, gasped, crowed, screwed up his eyes and said,—"That's all right."

"You'll do," said Lew. "I've 'eard o' men dyin' when you 'it 'em fair on the breast-bone."

"'Don't bring us no nearer goin', though," said Jakin. "Do you know where we're ordered?"

"Gawd knows, an' 'e won't split on a pal. Somewheres up to the Front to kill Paythans—hairy big beggars that turn you inside out if they get 'old o' you. They say their women are good-looking, too."

"Any loot?" asked the abandoned Jakin.

"Not a bloomin' anna, they say, unless you dig up the ground an' see what the niggers 'ave 'id. They're a poor lot." Jakin stood upright on the branch and gazed across the plain.

"Lew," said he, "there's the Colonel coming. 'Colonel's a good old beggar. Let's go an' talk to 'im."

Lew nearly fell out of the tree at the audacity of the suggestion. Like Jakin he feared not God neither regarded he Man, but there are limits even to the audacity of drummer-boy, and to speak to a Colonel was . . .

But Jakin had slid down the trunk and doubled in the direction of the Colonel. That officer was walking wrapped in thought and visions of a C.

B.—yes, even a K. C. B., for had he not at command one of the best Regiments of the Line—the Fore and Fit? And he was aware of two small boys charging down upon him. Once before it had been solemnly reported to him that "the Drums were in a state of mutiny"; Jakin and Lew being the ringleaders. This looked like an organized conspiracy.

The boys halted at twenty yards, walked to the regulation four paces, and saluted together, each as well set-up as a ramrod and little taller.

The Colonel was in a genial mood; the boys appeared very forlorn and unprotected on the desolate plain, and one of them was handsome.

"Well!" said the Colonel, recognizing them. "Are you going to pull me down in the open? I'm sure I never interfere with you, even though" —he sniffed suspiciously—"you have been smoking."

It was time to strike while the iron was hot. Their hearts beat tumultuously.

"Beg y' pardon, Sir," began Jakin. "The Reg'ment's ordered on active service, Sir?"

"So I believe," said the Colonel, courteously.

"Is the Band goin', Sir?" said both together. Then, without pause, "We're goin', Sir, ain't we?"

"You!" said the Colonel, stepping back the

more fully to take in the two small figures. "You! You'd die in the first march."

"No, we wouldn't, Sir. We can march with the Regiment anywheres—p'rade an' anywhere else," said Jakin.

"If Tom Kidd goes 'e'll shut up like a clasp-knife," said Lew. "Tom 'as very close veins in both 'is legs, Sir."

"Very how much?"

"Very close veins, Sir. That's why they swells after long p'rade, Sir. If 'e can go, we can go, Sir."

Again the Colonel looked at them long and intently.

"Yes, the Band is going," he said, as gravely as though he had been addressing a brother officer. "Have you any parents, either of you two?"

"No, Sir," rejoicingly from Lew and Jakin. "We're both orphans, Sir. There's no one to be considered of on our account, Sir."

"You poor little sprats, and you want to go up to the Front with the Regiment, do you? Why?"

"I've wore the Queen's Uniform for two years," said Jakin. "It's very 'ard, Sir, that a man don't get no recompense for doin' 'is dooty, Sir."

"An'—an' if I don't go, Sir," interrupted Lew,

"the Bandmaster 'e says 'e'll catch an' make a bloo—a blessed musician o' me, Sir. Before I've seen any service, Sir."

The Colonel made no answer for a long time. Then he said quietly:—"If you're passed by the Doctor I dare say you can go. I shouldn't smoke if I were you."

The boys saluted and disappeared. The Colonel walked home and told the story to his wife, who nearly cried over it. The Colonel was well pleased. If that was the temper of the children, what would not the men do?

Jakin and Lew entered the boys' barrack-room with great stateliness, and refused to hold any conversation with their comrades for at least ten minutes. Then, bursting with pride, Jakin drawled:—"I've bin intervooin' the Colonel. Good old beggar is the Colonel. Says I to 'im, 'Colonel,' says I, 'let me go the Front, along o' the Reg'ment.' 'To the Front you shall go,' says 'e, 'an' I only wish there was more like you among the dirty little devils that bang the bloomin' drums.' Kidd, if you throw your 'coutrements at me for tellin' you the truth to your own advantage, your legs 'll swell."

None the less there was a Battle-Royal in the barrack-room, for the boys were consumed with envy and hate, and neither Jakin nor Lew behaved in conciliatory wise.

"I'm goin' out to say adoo to my girl," said Lew, to cap the climax. "Don't none o' you touch my kit because it's wanted for active service, me bein' specially invited to go by the Colonel."

He strolled forth and whistled in the clump of trees at the back of the Married Quarters till Cris came to him, and, the preliminary kisses being given and taken, Lew began to explain the situation.

"I'm goin' to the Front with the Reg'ment," he said, valiantly.

"Piggy, you're a little liar," said Cris, but her heart misgave her, for Lew was not in the habit of lying.

"Liar yourself, Cris," said Lew, slipping an arm round her. "I'm goin'. When the Reg'ment marches out you'll see me with 'em, all galliant and gay. Give us another kiss, Cris, on the strength of it."

"If you'd on'y a-stayed at the Depôt—where you *ought* to ha' bin—you could get as many of 'em as—as you dam please," whimpered Cris, putting up her mouth.

"It's 'ard, Cris. I grant you it's 'ard. But what's a man to do? If I'd a-stayed at the Depôt, you wouldn't think anything of me."

"Like as not, but I'd 'ave you with me, Piggy. An' all the thinkin' in the world isn't like kissin'."

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"'Piggy, you're a little liar,' said Cris."

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"An' all the kissin' in the world isn't like 'avin' a medal to wear on the front o' your coat."

"*You* won't get no medal."

"Oh, yus, I shall though. Me an' Jakin are the only acting-drummers that'll be took along. All the rest is full men, an' we'll get our medals with them."

"They might ha' taken anybody but you, Piggy. You'll get killed—you're so venturesome. Stay with me, Piggy, darlin', down at the Depôt, an' I'll love you true forever."

"Ain't you goin' to do that *now*, Cris? You said you was."

"O' course I am, but th' other's more comfortable. Wait till you've growed a bit, Piggy. You aren't no taller than me now."

"I've bin in the army for two years an' I'm not goin' to get out of a chanst o' seein' service an' don't you try to make me do so. I'll come back, Cris, an' when I take on as a man I'll marry you—marry you when I'm a Lance."

"Promise, Piggy?"

Lew reflected on the future as arranged by Jakin a short time previously, but Cris's mouth was very near to his own.

"I promise, s'elp me Gawd!" said he.

Cris slid an arm round his neck.

"I won't 'old you back no more, Piggy. Go away an' get your medal, an' I'll make you a

new button-bag as nice as I know how," she whispered.

"Put some o' your 'air into it, Cris, an' I'll keep it in my pocket so long's I'm alive."

Then Cris wept anew, and the interview ended. Public feeling among the drummer-boys rose to fever pitch and the lives of Jakin and Lew became unenviable. Not only had they been permitted to enlist two years before the regulation boy's age—fourteen—but, by virtue, it seemed, of their extreme youth, they were allowed to go to the Front—which thing had not happened to acting-drummers within the knowledge of boy. The Band which was to accompany the Regiment had been cut down to the regulation twenty men, the surplus returning to the ranks. Jakin and Lew were attached to the Band as supernumeraries, though they would much have preferred being Company buglers.

"'Don't matter much," said Jakin, after the medical inspection. "Be thankful that we're 'lowed to go at all. The Doctor 'e said that if we could stand what we took from the Bazar-Sergeant's son we'd stand pretty nigh anything."

"Which we will," said Lew, looking tenderly at the ragged and ill-made housewife that Cris had given him, with a lock of her hair worked into a sprawling "L" upon the cover.

"It was the best I could," she sobbed. "I wouldn't let mother nor the Sergeant's tailor 'elp me. Keep it always, Piggy, an' remember I love you true."

They marched to the railway station, nine hundred and sixty strong, and every soul in cantonments turned out to see them go. The drummers gnashed their teeth at Jakin and Lew marching with the Band, the married women wept upon the platform, and the Regiment cheered its noble self black in the face.

"A nice level lot," said the Colonel to the Second-in-Command, as they watched the first four companies entraining.

"Fit to do anything," said the Second-in-Command, enthusiastically. "But it seems to me they're a thought too young and tender for the work in hand. It's bitter cold up at the Front now."

"They're sound enough," said the Colonel. "We must take our chance of sick casualties."

So they went northward, ever northward, past droves and droves of camels, armies of camp followers, and legions of laden mules, the throng thickening day by day, till with a shriek the train pulled up at a hopelessly congested junction where six lines of temporary track accommodated six forty-wagon trains; where whistles blew, Babus sweated and Commissariat officers

swore from dawn till far into the night amid the wind-driven chaff of the fodder-bales and the lowing of a thousand steers.

"Hurry up—you're badly wanted at the Front," was the message that greeted the Fore and Aft, and the occupants of the Red Cross carriages told the same tale.

"'Tisn't so much the bloomin' fighting," gasped a headbound trooper of Hussars to a knot of admiring Fore and Afts. "'Tisn't so much the bloomin' fightin', though there's enough o' that. It's the bloomin' food an' the bloomin' climate. Frost all night 'cept when it hails, and biling sun all day, and the water stinks fit to knock you down. I got my 'ead chipped like a egg; I've got pneumonia too, an' my guts is all out o' order. 'Tain't no bloomin' picnic in those parts, I can tell you."

"Wot are the niggers like?" demanded a private.

"There's some prisoners in that train yonder. Go an' look at 'em. They're the aristocracy o' the country. The common folk are a dashed sight uglier. If you want to know what they fight with, reach under my seat an' pull out the long knife that's there."

They dragged out and beheld for the first time the grim, bone-handled, triangular Afghan knife. It was almost as long as Lew.

"That's the thing to jint ye," said the trooper, feebly.

"It can take off a man's arm at the shoulder as easy as slicing butter. I halved the beggar that used that 'un, but there's more of his likes up above. They don't understand thrustin', but they're devils to slice."

The men strolled across the tracks to inspect the Afghan prisoners. They were unlike any "niggers" that the Fore and Aft had ever met—these huge, black-haired, scowling sons of the Beni-Israel. As the men stared the Afghans spat freely and muttered one to another with lowered eyes.

"My eyes! Wot awful swine!" said Jakin, who was in the rear of the procession. "Say, old man, how you got *puckrowed*, eh? *Kiswasti* you wasn't hanged for your ugly face, hey?"

The tallest of the company turned, his leg-irons, clanking at the movement, and stared at the boy. "See!" he cried to his fellows in Pushto. "They send children against us. What a people, and what fools!"

"*Hya!*" said Jakin, nodding his head cheerily. "You go down-country. *Khana* get, *peenikap-anee* get—live like a bloomin' Raja *ke marfik*. That's a better *bandobust* than baynit get it in your innards. Good-bye, ole man. Take care o' your beautiful figure-'ed, an' try to look *kushy*."

The men laughed and fell in for their first march when they began to realize that a soldier's life was not all beer and skittles. They were much impressed with the size and bestial ferocity of the niggers whom they had now learned to call "Paythans," and more with the exceeding discomfort of their own surroundings. Twenty old soldiers in the corps would have taught them how to make themselves moderately snug at night, but they had no old soldiers, and, as the troops on the line of march said, "they lived like pigs." They learned the heart-breaking cussedness of camp-kitchens and camels and the depravity of an E. P. tent and a wither-wrung mule. They studied animalculæ in water, and developed a few cases of dysentery in their study.

At the end of their third march they were disagreeably surprised by the arrival in their camp of a hammered iron slug which, fired from a steadyrest at seven hundred yards, flicked out the brains of a private seated by the fire. This robbed them of their peace for a night, and was the beginning of a long-range fire carefully calculated to that end. In the daytime they saw nothing except an occasional puff of smoke from a crag above the line of march. At night there were distant spurts of flame and occasional casualties, which set the whole camp blazing into the gloom, and, occasionally, into opposite tents.

Then they swore vehemently and vowed that this was magnificent but not war.

Indeed it was not. The Regiment could not halt for reprisals against the *franctireurs* of the country side. Its duty was to go forward and make connection with the Scotch and Gurkha troops with which it was brigaded. The Afghans knew this, and knew too, after their first tentative shots, that they were dealing with a raw regiment. Thereafter they devoted themselves to the task of keeping the Fore and Aft on the strain. Not for anything would they have taken equal liberties with a seasoned corps—with the wicked little Gurkhas, whose delight it was to lie out in the open on a dark night and stalk their stalkers—with the terrible, big men dressed in women's clothes, who could be heard praying to their God in the night-watches, and whose peace of mind no amount of "sniping" could shake—or with those vile Sikhs, who marched so ostentatiously unprepared and who dealt out such grim reward to those who tried to profit by that unpreparedness. This white regiment was different—quite different. It slept like a hog, and, like a hog, charged in every direction when it was roused. Its sentries walked with a footfall that could be heard for a quarter of a mile; would fire at anything that moved—even a driven donkey—and when they had once fired,

could be scientifically "rushed" and laid out a horror and an offence against the morning sun. Then there were camp-followers who straggled and could be cut up without fear. Their shrieks would disturb the white boys, and the loss of their services would inconvenience them sorely.

Thus, at every march, the hidden enemy became bolder and the regiment writhed and twisted under attacks it could not avenge. The crowning triumph was a sudden night-rush ending in the cutting of many tent-ropes, the collapse of the sodden canvas and a glorious knifing of the men who struggled and kicked below. It was a great deed, neatly carried out, and it shook the already shaken nerves of the Fore and Aft. All the courage that they had been required to exercise up to this point was the "two o'clock in the morning courage"; and they, so far, had only succeeded in shooting their comrades and losing their sleep.

Sullen, discontented, cold, savage, sick, with their uniforms dulled and unclean, the "Fore and Aft" joined their Brigade.

"I hear you had a tough time of it coming up," said the Brigadier. But when he saw the hospital-sheets his face fell.

"This is bad," said he to himself. "They're as rotten as sheep." And aloud to the Colonel, —"I'm afraid we can't spare you just yet. We

want all we have, else I should have given you ten days to recruit in."

The Colonel winced. "On my honor, Sir," he returned, "there is not the least necessity to think of sparing us. My men have been rather mauled and upset without a fair return. They only want to go in somewhere where they can see what's before them."

"'Can't say I think much of the Fore and Fit," said the Brigadier, in confidence, to his Brigade-Major. "They've lost all their soldiering, and, by the trim of them, might have marched through the country from the other side. A more fagged-out set of men I never put eyes on."

"Oh, they'll improve as the work goes on. The parade gloss has been rubbed off a little, but they'll put on field polish before long," said the Brigade-Major. "They've been mauled, and they quite don't understand it."

They did not. All the hitting was on one side, and it was cruelly hard hitting with accessories that made them sick. There was also the real sickness that laid hold of a strong man and dragged him howling to the grave. Worst of all, their officers knew just as little of the country as the men themselves, and looked as if they did. The Fore and Aft were in a thoroughly unsatisfactory condition, but they believed that all

would be well if they could once get a fair go-in at the enemy. Pot-shots up and down the valleys were unsatisfactory, and the bayonet never seemed to get a chance. Perhaps it was as well, for a long-limbed Afghan with a knife had a reach of eight feet, and could carry away enough lead to disable three Englishmen. The Fore and Fit would like some rifle-practice at the enemy—all seven hundred rifles blazing together. That wish showed the mood of the men.

The Gurkhas walked into their camp, and in broken, barrack-room English strove to fraternize with them; offered them pipes of tobacco and stood them treat at the canteen. But the Fore and Aft, not knowing much of the nature of the Gurkhas, treated them as they would treat any other "niggers," and the little men in green trotted back to their firm friends the Highlanders, and with many grins confided to them:—"That dam white regiment no dam use. Sulky—ugh! Dirty—ugh! Hya, any tot for Johnny?" Whereat the Highlanders smote the Gurkhas as to the head, and told them not to vilify a British Regiment, and the Gurkhas grinned cavernously, for the Highlanders were their elder brothers and entitled to the privileges of kinship. The common soldier who touches a Gurkha is more than likely to have his head sliced open.

Three days later the Brigadier arranged a battle

according to the rules of war and the peculiarity of the Afghan temperament. The enemy were massing in inconvenient strength among the hills, and the moving or many green standards warned him that the tribes were "up" in aid of the Afghan regular troops. A Squadron and a half of Bengal Lancers represented the available Cavalry, and two screw-guns borrowed from a column thirty miles away, the Artillery at the General's disposal.

"If they stand, as I've a very strong notion that they will, I fancy we shall see an infantry fight that will be worth watching," said the Brigadier. "We'll do it in style. Each regiment shall be played into action by its Band, and we'll hold the Cavalry in reserve."

"For *all* the reserve?" somebody asked.

"For all the reserve; because we're going to crumple them up," said the Brigadier, who was an extraordinary Brigadier, and did not believe in the value of a reserve when dealing with Asiatics. And, indeed, when you come to think of it, had the British Army consistently waited for reserves in all its little affairs, the boundaries of Our Empire would have stopped at Brighton beach.

That battle was to be a glorious battle.

The three regiments debouching from three separate gorges, after duly crowning the heights above, were to converge from the centre, left,

and right upon what we will call the Afghan army, then stationed toward the lower extremity of a flat-bottomed valley. Thus it will be seen that three sides of the valley practically belonged to the English, while the fourth was strictly Afghan property. In the event of defeat the Afghans had the rocky hills to fly to, where the fire from the guerilla tribes in aid would cover their retreat. In the event of victory these same tribes would rush down and lend their weight to the rout of the British.

The screw-guns were to shell the head of each Afghan rush that was made in close formation, and the Cavalry, held in reserve in the right valley, were to gently stimulate the break-up which would follow on the combined attack. The Brigadier, sitting upon a rock overlooking the valley, would watch the battle unrolled at his feet. The Fore and Aft would debouch from the central gorge, the Gurkhas from the left, and the Highlanders from the right, for the reason that the left flank of the enemy seemed as though it required the most hammering. It was not every day that an Afghan force would take ground in the open, and the Brigadier was resolved to make the most of it.

"If we only had a few more men," he said, plaintively, "we could surround the creatures and crumble 'em up thoroughly. As it is, I'm

afraid we can only cut them up as they run. It's a great pity."

The Fore and Aft had enjoyed unbroken peace for five days, and were beginning, in spite of dysentery, to recover their nerve. But they were not happy, for they did not know the work in hand, and had they known, would not have known how to do it. Throughout those five days in which old soldiers might have taught them the craft of the game, they discussed together their misadventures in the past—how such an one was alive at dawn and dead ere the dusk, and with what shrieks and struggles such another had given up his soul under the Afghan knife. Death was a new and horrible thing to the sons of mechanics who were used to die decently of zymotic disease; and their careful conservation in barracks had done nothing to make them look upon it with less dread.

Very early in the dawn the bugles began to blow, and the Fore and Aft, filled with a misguided enthusiasm, turned out without waiting for a cup of coffee and a biscuit; and were rewarded by being kept under arms in the cold while the other regiments leisurely prepared for the fray. All the world knows that it is ill taking the breeks off a Highlander. It is much iller to try to make him stir unless he is convinced of the necessity for haste.

The Fore and Aft awaited, leaning upon their rifles and listening to the protests of their empty stomachs. The Colonel did his best to remedy the default of lining as soon as it was borne in upon him that the affair would not begin at once, and so well did he succeed that the coffee was just ready when—the men moved off, their Band leading. Even then there had been a mistake in time, and the Fore and Aft came out into the valley ten minutes before the proper hour. Their Band wheeled to the right after reaching the open, and retired behind a little rocky knoll still playing while the regiment went past.

It was not a pleasant sight that opened on the uninstructed view, for the lower end of the valley appeared to be filled by an army in position —real and actual regiments attired in red coats, and—of this there was no doubt—firing Martini-Henri bullets which cup up the ground a hundred yards in front of the leading company. Over that pock-marked ground the regiment had to pass, and it opened the ball with a general and profound courtesy to the piping pickets; ducking in perfect time, as though it had been brazed on a rod. Being half-capable of thinking for itself, it fired a volley by the simple process of pitching its rifle into its shoulder and pulling the trigger. The bullets may have accounted for some of the watchers on the hillside. but they certainly did

not affect the mass of enemy in front, while the noise of the rifles drowned any orders that might have been given.

"Good God!" said the Brigadier, sitting on the rock high above all. "That regiment has spoiled the whole show. Hurry up the others, and let the screw-guns get off."

But the screw-guns, in working round the heights, had stumbled upon a wasp's nest of a small mud fort which they incontinently shelled at eight hundred yards, to the huge discomfort of the occupants, who were unaccustomed to weapons of such devilish precision.

The Fore and Aft continued to go forward but with shortened stride. Where were the other regiments, and why did these niggers use Martinis? They took open order instinctively, lying down and firing at random, rushing a few paces forward and lying down again, according to the regulations. Once in this formation, each man felt himself desperately alone, and edged in toward his fellow for comfort's sake.

Then the crack of his neighbor's rifle at his ear led him to fire as rapidly as he could—again for the sake of the comfort of the noise. The reward was not long delayed. Five volleys plunged the files in banked smoke impenetrable to the eye, and the bullets began to take ground twenty or thirty yards in front of the firers, as the weight

of the bayonet dragged down, and to the right arms wearied with holding the kick of the leaping Martini. The Company Commanders peered helplessly through the smoke, the more nervous mechanically trying to fan it away with their helmets.

"High and to the left!" bawled a Captain till he was hoarse. "No good! Cease firing, and let it drift away a bit."

Three and four times the bugles shrieked the order, and when it was obeyed the Fore and Aft looked that their foe should be lying before them in mown swaths of men. A light wind drove the smoke to leeward, and showed the enemy still in position and apparently unaffected. A quarter of a ton of lead had been buried a furlong in front of them, as the ragged earth attested.

That was not demoralizing. They were waiting for the mad riot to die down, and were firing quietly into the heart of the smoke. A private of the Fore and Aft spun up his company shrieking with agony, another was kicking the earth and gasping, and a third, ripped through the lower intestines by a jagged bullet, was calling aloud on his comrades to put him out of his pain. These were the casualties, and they were not soothing to hear or see. The smoke cleared to a dull haze.

Then the foe began to shout with a great shouting and a mass—a black mass—detached itself from the main body, and rolled over the ground at horrid speed. It was composed of, perhaps, three hundred men, who would shout and fire and slash if the rush of their fifty comrades who were determined to die carried home. The fifty were Ghazis, half-maddened with drugs and wholly mad with religious fanaticism. When they rushed the British fire ceased, and in the lull the order was given to close ranks and meet them with the bayonet.

Any one who knew the business could have told the Fore and Aft that the only way of dealing with a Ghazi rush is by volleys at long ranges; because a man who means to die, who desires to die, who will gain heaven by dying, must, in nine cases out of ten, kill a man who has a lingering prejudice in favor of life if he can close with the latter. Where they should have closed and gone forward, the Fore and Aft opened out and skirmished, and where they should have opened out and fired, they closed and waited.

A man dragged from his blankets half awake and unfed is never in a pleasant frame of mind. Nor does his happiness increase when he watches the whites of the eyes of three hundred six-foot fiends upon whose beards the foam is lying, upon

whose tongues is a roar of wrath, and in whose hands are three-foot knives.

The Fore and Aft heard the Gurkha bugles bringing that regiment forward at the double, while the neighing of the Highland pipes came from the left. They strove to stay where they were, though the bayonets wavered down the line like the oars of a ragged boat. Then they felt body to body the amazing physical strength of their foes; a shriek of pain ended the rush, and the knives fell amid scenes not to be told. The men clubbed together and smote blindly—as often as not at their own fellows. Their front crumpled like paper, and the fifty Ghazis passed on; their backers, now drunk with success, fighting as madly as they.

Then the rear-ranks were bidden to close up, and the subalterns dashed into the stew—alone. For the rear-rank had heard the clamor in front, the yells and the howls of pain, and had seen the dark stale blood that makes afraid. They were not going to stay. It was the rushing of the camps over again. Let their officers go to Hell, if they chose; they would get away from the knives.

"Come on!" shrieked the subalterns, and their men, cursing them, drew back, each closing into his neighbor and wheeling round.

Charteris and Devlin, subalterns of the last

company, faced their death alone in the belief that their men would follow.

"You've killed me, you cowards," sobbed Devlin and dropped, cut from the shoulder-strap to the centre of the chest, and a fresh detachment of his men retreating, always retreating, trampled him under foot as they made for the pass whence they had emerged.

I kissed her in the kitchen and I kissed her in the hall.
Child'un, child'un, follow me!
Oh Golly, said the cook, is he gwine to kiss us all?
Halla—Halla—Halla Halleujah!

The Gurkhas were pouring through the left gorge and over the heights at the double to the invitation of their regimental Quickstep. The black rocks were crowned with dark green spiders as the bugles gave tongue jubilantly:

In the morning! In the morning by the bright light!
When Gabriel blows his trumpet in the morning!

The Gurkha rear-companies tripped and blundered over loose stones. The front-files halted for a moment to take stock of the valley and to settle stray boot-laces. Then a happy little sigh of contentment soughed down the ranks, and it was as though the land smiled, for behold there below was the enemy, and it was to meet them that the Gurkhas had doubled so hastily.

There was much enemy. There would be amusement. The little men hitched their *kukris* well to hand, and gaped expectantly at their officers as terriers grin ere the stone is cast for them to fetch. The Gurkhas' ground sloped downward to the valley, and they enjoyed a fair view of the proceedings. They sat upon the bowlders to watch, for their officers were not going to waste their wind in assisting to repulse a Ghazi rush more than half a mile away. Let the white men look to their own front.

"Hi! yi!" said the Subadar-Major, who was sweating profusely. "Dam fools yonder, stand close-order! This is no time for close order, it's the time for volleys. Ugh!"

Horrified, amused, and indignant, the Gurkhas beheld the retirement—let us be gentle—of the Fore and Aft with a running chorus of oaths and commentaries.

"They run! The white men run! Colonel Sahib, may *we* also do a little running?" murmured Runbir Thappa, the Senior Jemadar.

But the Colonel would have none of it. "Let the beggars be cut up a little," said he wrathfully. "'Serves 'em right. They'll be prodded into facing round in a minute." He looked through his field-glasses, and caught the glint of an officer's sword.

"Beating 'em with the flat—damned con-

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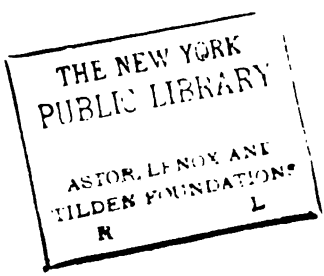
"'Get back! Get back, you cowards, — you women!'"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scripts! How the Ghazis are walking into them!" said he.

The Fore and Aft, heading back, bore with them their officers. The narrowness of the pass forced the mob into solid formation, and the rear-rank delivered some sort of a wavering volley. The Ghazis drew off, for they did not know what reserves the gorge might hide. Moreover, it was never wise to chase white men too far. They returned as wolves return to cover, satisfied with the slaughter that they had done, and only stopping to slash at the wounded on the ground. A quarter of a mile had the Fore and Aft retreated, and now, jammed in the pass, was quivering with pain, shaken and demoralized with fear, while the officers, maddened beyond control, smote the men with the hilts and the flats of their swords.

"Get back! Get back, you cowards—you women! Right about face—column of companies, form—you hounds!" shouted the Colonel, and the subalterns swore aloud. But the Regiment wanted to go—to go anywhere out of the range of those merciless knives. It swayed to and fro irresolutely with shouts and outcries, while from the right the Gurkhas dropped volley after volley of cripple-stopper Snider bullets at long range into the mob of the Ghazis returning to their own troops.

The tune settled into full swing and the boys kept shoulder to shoulder, Jakin banging the drum as one possessed. The one fife made a thin and pitiful squeaking, but the tune carried far, even to the Gurkhas.

"Come on, you dogs!" muttered Jakin, to himself. "Are we to play forhever?" Lew was staring straight in front of him and marching more stiffly than ever he had done on parade.

And in bitter mockery of the distant mob, the old tune of the Old Line shrilled and rattled:

> Some talk of Alexander,
> And some of Hercules;
> Of Hector and Lysander,
> And such great names as these;

There was a far-off clapping of hands from the Gurkhas, and a roar from the Highlanders in the distance, but never a shot was fired by British or Afghan. The two little red dots moved forward in the open parallel to the enemy's front.

> But of all the world's great heroes
> There's none that can compare,
> With a tow-row-row-row-row-row,
> To the British Grenadier!

The men of the Fore and Aft were gathering thick at the entrance into the plain. The Brigadier on the heights far above was speechless with

rage. Still no movement from the enemy. The day stayed to watch the children.

Jakin halted and beat the long roll of the Assembly, while the fife squealed despairingly.

"Right about face! Hold up, Lew, you're drunk," said Jakin. They wheeled and marched back:

Those heroes of antiquity
Ne'er saw a cannon-ball,
Nor knew the force o' powder,

"Here they come!" said Jakin. "Go on, Lew:"

To scare their foes withal!

The Fore and Aft were pouring out of the valley. What officers had said to men in that time of shame and humiliation will never be known; for neither officers nor men speak of it now.

"They are coming anew!" shouted a priest among the Afghans. "Do not kill the boys! Take them alive, and they shall be of our faith."

But the first volley had been fired, and Lew dropped on his face. Jakin stood for a minute, spun round and collapsed, as the Fore and Aft came forward, the maledictions of their officers in their ears, and in their hearts the shame of open shame.

Half the men had seen the drummers die, and they made no sign. They did not even shout.

They doubled out straight across the plain in open order, and they did not fire.

"This," said the Colonel of Gurkhas, softly, "is the real attack, as it ought to have been delivered. Come on, my children."

"Ulu-lu-lu-lu!" squealed the Gurkhas, and came down with a joyful clicking of *kukris*—those vicious Gurkha knives.

On the right there was no rush. The Highlanders, cannily commending their souls to God (for it matters as much to a dead man whether he has been shot in a Border scuffle or at Waterloo) opened out and fired according to their custom, that is to say without heat and without intervals, while the screw-guns, having disposed of the impertinent mud fort aforementioned, dropped shell after shell into the clusters round the flickering green standards on the heights.

"Charrging is an unfortunate necessity," murmured the Color-Sergeant of the right company of the Highlanders.

"It makes the men sweer so, but I am thinkin' that it will come to a charrge if these black devils stand much longer. Stewarrt, man, you're firing into the eye of the sun, and he'll not take any harm for Government ammuneetion. A foot lower and a great deal slower! What are the English doing? They're very quiet there in the centre. Running again?"

The English were not running. They were hacking and hewing and stabbing, for though one white man is seldom physically a match for an Afghan in a sheepskin or wadded coat, yet, through the pressure of many white men behind, and a certain thirst for revenge in his heart, he becomes capable of doing much with both ends of his rifle. The Fore and Aft held their fire till one bullet could drive through five or six men, and the front of the Afghan force gave on the volley. They then selected their men, and slew them with deep gasps and short hacking coughs, and groanings of leather belts against strained bodies, and realized for the first time that an Afghan attacked is far less formidable than an Afghan attacking; which fact old soldiers might have told them.

But they had no old soldiers in their ranks.

The Gurkhas' stall at the bazar was the noisiest, for the men were engaged—to a nasty noise as of beef being cut on the block—with the *kukri*, which they preferred to the bayonet; well knowing how the Afghan hates the half-moon blade.

As the Afghans wavered, the green standards on the mountain moved down to assist them in a last rally. Which was unwise. The Lancers chafing in the right gorge had thrice despatched their only subaltern as galloper to report on the progress of affairs. On the third occasion he re-

turned, with a bullet-graze on his knee, swearing strange oaths in Hindoostani, and saying that all things were ready. So that Squadron swung round the right of the Highlanders with a wicked whistling of wind in the pennons of its lances, and fell upon the remnant just when, according to all the rules of war, it should have waited for the foe to show more signs of wavering.

But it was a dainty charge, deftly delivered, and it ended by the Cavalry finding itself at the head of the pass by which the Afghans intended to retreat; and down the track that the lances had made streamed two companies of the Highlanders, which was never intended by the Brigadier. The new development was successful. It detached the enemy from his base as a sponge is torn from a rock, and left him ringed about with fire in that pitiless plain. And as a sponge is chased round the bath-tub by the hand of the bather, so were the Afghans chased till they broke into little detachments much more difficult to dispose of than large masses.

"See!" quoth the Brigadier. "Everything has come as I arranged. We've cut their base, and now we'll bucket 'em to pieces."

A direct hammering was all that the Brigadier had dared to hope for, considering the size of the force at his disposal; but men who stand or fall by the errors of their opponents may be forgiven

for turning Chance into Design. The bucketing went forward merrily. The Afghan forces were upon the run—the run of wearied wolves who snarl and bite over their shoulders. The red lances dipped by twos and threes, and, with a shriek, up rose the lance-butt, like a spar on a stormy sea, as the trooper cantering forward cleared his point. The Lancers kept between their prey and the steep hills, for all who could were trying to escape from the valley of death. The Highlanders gave the fugitives two hundred yards' law, and then brought them down, gasping and choking ere they could reach the protection of the bowlders above. The Gurkhas followed suit; but the Fore and Aft were killing on their own account, for they had penned a mass of men between their bayonets and a wall of rock, and the flash of the rifles was lighting the wadded coats.

"We cannot hold them, Captain Sahib!" panted a Ressaidar of Lancers. "Let us try the carbine. The lance is good, but it wastes time."

They tried the carbine, and still the enemy melted away—fled up the hills by hundreds when there were only twenty bullets to stop them. On the heights the screw-guns ceased firing—they had run out of ammunition—and the Brigadier groaned, for the musketry fire could not sufficiently smash the retreat. Long before the last

volleys were fired, the litters were out in force looking for the wounded. The battle was over, and, but for want of fresh troops, the Afghans would have been wiped off the earth. As it was they counted their dead by hundreds, and nowhere were the dead thicker than in the track of the Fore and Aft.

But the Regiment did not cheer with the Highlanders, nor did they dance uncouth dances with the Gurkhas among the dead. They looked under their brows at the Colonel as they leaned upon their rifles and panted.

"Get back to camp, you. Haven't you disgraced yourself enough for one day! Go and look to the wounded. It's all you're fit for," said the Colonel. Yet for the past hour the Fore and Aft had been doing all that mortal commander could expect. They had lost heavily because they did not know how to set about their business with proper skill, but they had borne themselves gallantly, and this was their reward.

A young and sprightly Color-Sergeant, who had begun to imagine himself a hero, offered his water-bottle to a Highlander, whose tongue was black with thirst. "I drink with no cowards," answered the youngster, huskily, and, turning to a Gurkha, said, "Hya, Johnny! Drink water got it?" The Gurkha grinned and passed his bottle. The Fore and Aft said no word.

They went back to camp when the field of strife had been a little mopped up and made presentable, and the Brigadier, who saw himself a Knight in three months, was the only soul who was complimentary to them. The Colonel was heart-broken and the officers were savage and sullen.

"Well," said the Brigadier, "they are young troops of course, and it was not unnatural that they should retire in disorder for a bit."

"Oh, my only Aunt Maria!" murmured a junior Staff Officer. "Retire in disorder! It was a bally run!"

"But they came again as we all know," cooed the Brigadier, the Colonel's ashy-white face before him, "and they behaved as well as could possibly be expected. Behaved beautifully, indeed. I was watching them. It's not a matter to take to heart, Colonel. As some German General said of his men, they wanted to be shooted over a little, that was all." To himself he said: "Now they're blooded I can give 'em responsible work. It's as well that they got what they did. 'Teach 'em more than half a dozen rifle flirtations, that will—later—run alone and bite. Poor old Colonel, though."

All that afternoon the heliograph winked and flickered on the hills, striving to tell the good news to a mountain forty miles away. And in

the evening there arrived, dusty, sweating, and sore, a misguided Correspondent who had gone out to assist at a trumpery village-burning and who had read off the message from afar, cursing his luck the while.

"Let's have the details somehow—as full as ever you can, please. It's the first time I've ever been left this campaign," said the Correspondent to the Brigadier; and the Brigadier, nothing loath, told him how an Army of Communication had been crumpled up, destroyed, and all but annihilated by the craft, strategy, wisdom, and foresight of the Brigadier.

But some say, and among these be the Gurkhas who watched on the hillside, that that battle was won by Jakin and Lew, whose little bodies were borne up just in time to fit two gaps at the head of the big ditch-grave for the dead under the heights of Jagai.

CITY OF THE DREADFUL NIGHT

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CHAPTER I

A REAL LIVE CITY

WE are all backwoodsmen and barbarians together—we others dwelling beyond the Ditch, in the outer darkness of the Mofussil. There are no such things as commissioners and heads of departments in the world, and there is only one city in India. Bombay is too green, too pretty and too stragglesome; and Madras died ever so long ago. Let us take off our hats to Calcutta, the many-sided, the smoky, the magnificent, as we drive in over the Hugli Bridge in the dawn of a still February morning. We have left India behind us at Howrah Station, and now we enter foreign parts. No, not wholly foreign. Say rather too familiar.

All men of certain age know the feeling of caged irritation—an illustration in the *Graphic*, a bar of music of the light words of a friend from home may set it ablaze—that comes from the knowledge of our lost heritage of London. At home they, the other men, our equals, have at their disposal all that town can supply—the roar of the streets, the lights, the music, the pleasant places, the millions of their own kind, and a

wilderness full of pretty, fresh-colored Englishwomen, theatres and restaurants. It is their right. They accept it as such, and even affect to look upon it with contempt. And we, we have nothing except the few amusements that we painfully build up for ourselves—the dolorous dissipations of gymkhanas where every one knows everybody else, or the chastened intoxication of dances where all engagements are booked, in ink, ten days ahead, and where everybody's antecedents are as patent as his or her method of waltzing. We have been deprived of our inheritance. The men at home are enjoying it all, not knowing how fair and rich it is, and we at the most can only fly westward for a few months and gorge what, properly speaking, should take seven or eight or ten luxurious years. That is the lost heritage of London; and the knowledge of the forfeiture, wilful or forced, comes to most men at times and seasons, and they get cross.

Calcutta holds out false hopes of some return. The dense smoke hangs low, in the chill of the morning, over an ocean of roofs, and, as the city wakes, there goes up to the smoke a deep, full-throated boom of life and motion and humanity. For this reason does he who sees Calcutta for the first time hang joyously out of the *ticca-gharri* and sniff the smoke, and turn his face toward the

tumult, saying: "This is, at last, some portion of my heritage returned to me. This is a city. There is life here, and there should be all manner of pleasant things for the having, across the river and under the smoke." When Leland, he who wrote the Hans Breitmann Ballads, once desired to know the name of an austere, plug-hatted redskin of repute, his answer, from the lips of a half-bred, was:

"He Injun. He big Injun. He heap big Injun. He dam big heap Injun. He dam mighty great big heap Injun. He Jones!" The litany is an expressive one, and exactly describes the first emotions of a wandering savage adrift in Calcutta. The eye has lost its sense of proportion, the focus has contracted through overmuch residence in up-country stations—twenty minutes' canter from hospital to parade-ground, you know—and the mind has shrunk with the eye. Both say together, as they take in the sweep of shipping above and below the Hugli Bridge: "Why, this is London! This is the docks. This is Imperial. This is worth coming across India to see!"

Then a distinctly wicked idea takes possession of the mind: "What a divine—what a heavenly place to *loot!*" This gives place to a much worse devil—that of Conservatism. It seems not only a wrong but a criminal thing to allow

natives to have any voice in the control of such a city—adorned, docked, wharfed, fronted and reclaimed by Englishmen, existing only because England lives, and dependent for its life on England. All India knows of the Calcutta Municipality; but has any one thoroughly investigated the Big Calcutta Stink? There is only one. Benares is fouler in point of concentrated, pent-up muck, and there are local stenches in Peshawur which are stronger than the B. C. S.; but, for diffused, soul-sickening expansiveness, the reek of Calcutta beats both Benares and Peshawur. Bombay cloaks her stenches with a veneer of assafœtida and *huqa*-tobacco; Calcutta is above pretence. There is no tracing back the Calcutta plague to any one source. It is faint, it is sickly, and it is indescribable; but Americans at the Great Eastern Hotel say that it is something like the smell of the Chinese quarter in San Francisco. It is certainly not an Indian smell. It resembles the essence of corruption that has rotted for the second time—the clammy odor of blue slime. And there is no escape from it. It blows across the *maidan;* it comes in gusts into the corridors of the Great Eastern Hotel; what they are pleased to call the "Palaces of Chouringhi" carry it; it swirls round the Bengal Club; it pours out of by-streets with sickening intensity, and the breeze of the morning is laden with it. It is first

found, in spite of the fume of the engines, in Howrah Station. It seems to be worst in the little lanes at the back of Lal Bazar where the drinking-shops are, but it is nearly as bad opposite Government House and in the Public Offices. The thing is intermittent. Six moderately pure mouthfuls of air may be drawn without offence. Then comes the seventh wave and the queasiness of an uncultured stomach. If you live long enough in Calcutta you grow used to it. The regular residents admit the disgrace, but their answer is: "Wait till the wind blows off the Salt Lakes where all the sewage goes, and *then* you'll smell something." That is their defence! Small wonder that they consider Calcutta is a fit place for a permanent Viceroy. Englishmen who can calmly extenuate one shame by another are capable of asking for anything—and expecting to get it.

If an up-country station holding three thousand troops and twenty civilians owned such a possession as Calcutta does, the Deputy Commissioner or the Cantonment Magistrate would have all the natives off the board of management or decently shoveled into the background until the mess was abated. Then they might come on again and talk of "high-handed oppression" as much as they liked. That stink, to an unprejudiced nose, damns Calcutta as a City of Kings.

And, in spite of that stink, they allow, they even encourage, natives to look after the place! The damp, drainage-soaked soil is sick with the teeming life of a hundred years, and the Municipal Board list is choked with the names of natives—men of the breed born in and raised off this surfeited muck-heap! They own property, these amiable Aryans on the Municipal and the Bengal Legislative Council. Launch a proposal to tax them on that property, and they naturally howl. They also howl up-country, but there the halls for mass-meetings are few, and the vernacular papers fewer, and with a *zubbardusti* Secretary and a President whose favor is worth the having and whose wrath is undesirable, men are kept clean despite themselves, and may not poison their neighbors. Why, asks a savage, let them vote at all? They can put up with this filthiness. They *cannot* have any feelings worth caring a rush for. Let them live quietly and hide away their money under our protection, while we tax them till they know through their purses the measure of their neglect in the past, and when a little of the smell has been abolished, bring them back again to talk and take the credit of enlightenment. The better classes own their broughams and barouches; the worse can shoulder an Englishman into the kennel and talk to him as though he were a *khitmatgar*. They can refer

to an English lady as an *aurat;* they are permitted a freedom—not to put it too coarsely—of speech which, if used by an Englishman toward an Englishman, would end in serious trouble. They are fenced and protected and made inviolate. Surely they might be content with all those things without entering into matters which they cannot, by the nature of their birth, understand.

Now, whether all this genial diatribe be the outcome of an unbiased mind or the result first of sickness caused by that ferocious stench, and secondly of headache due to day-long smoking to drown the stench, is an open question. Anyway, Calcutta is a fearsome place for a man not educated up to it.

A word of advice to other barbarians. Do not bring a north-country servant into Calcutta. He is sure to get into trouble, because he does not understand the customs of the city. A Punjabi in this place for the first time esteems it his bounden duty to go to the *Ajaib-ghar*—the Museum. Such an one has gone and is even now returned very angry and troubled in the spirit. "I went to the Museum," says he, "and no one gave me any *gali.* I went to the market to buy my food, and then I sat upon a seat. There came a *chaprissi* who said: 'Go away, I want to sit here.' I said: 'I am here first.' He said: 'I am a *chaprissi! nikal jao!*' and he hit me. Now

that sitting-place was open to all, so I hit him till he wept. He ran away for the Police, and I went away too, for the Police here are all *Sahibs.* Can I have leave from two o'clock to go and look for that *chaprissi* and hit him again?"

Behold the situation! An unknown city full of smell that makes one long for rest and retirement, and a champing *naukar,* not yet six hours in the stew, who has started a blood-feud with an unknown *chaprissi* and clamors to go forth to the fray. General orders that, whatever may be said or done to him, he must not say or do anything in return lead to an eloquent harangue on the quality of *izzat* and the nature of "face blackening." There is no *izzat* in Calcutta, and this Awful Smell blackens the face of any Englishman who sniffs it.

Alas! for the lost delusion of the heritage that was to be restored. Let us sleep, let us sleep, and pray that Calcutta may be better to-morrow.

At present it is remarkably like sleeping with a corpse.

CHAPTER II

THE REFLECTIONS OF A SAVAGE

MORNING brings counsel. *Does* Calcutta smell so pestiferously after all? Heavy rain has fallen in the night. She is newly-washed, and the clear sunlight shows her at her best. Where, oh where, in all this wilderness of life shall a man go? Newman and Co. publish a three-rupee guide which produces first despair and then fear in the mind of the reader. Let us drop Newman and Co. out of the topmost window of the Great Eastern, trusting to luck and the flight of the hours to evolve wonders and mysteries and amusements.

The Great Eastern hums with life through all its hundred rooms. Doors slam merrily, and all the nations of the earth run up and down the staircases. This alone is refreshing, because the passers bump you and ask you to stand aside. Fancy finding any place outside a Levée-room where Englishmen are crowded together to this extent! Fancy sitting down seventy strong to *tâble d'hôte* and with a deafening clatter of knives and forks! Fancy finding a real bar

whence drinks may be obtained! and, joy of joys, fancy stepping out of the hotel into the arms of a live, white, helmeted, buttoned, truncheoned Bobby! A beautiful, burly Bobby—just the sort of man who, seven thousand miles away, staves off the stuttering witticism of the three-o'clock-in-the-morning reveler by the strong badged arm of authority. What would happen if one spoke to this Bobby? Would he be offended? He is not offended. He is affable. He has to patrol the pavement in front of the Great Eastern and to see that the crowding *ticca-gharris* do not jam. Toward a presumably respectable white he behaves as a man and a brother. There is no arrogance about him. And this is disappointing. Closer inspection shows that he is not a *real* Bobby after all. He is a Municipal Police something and his uniform is not correct; at least if they have not changed the dress of the men at home. But no matter. Later on we will inquire into the Calcutta Bobby, because he is a white man, and has to deal with some of the "toughest" folk that ever set out of malice aforethought to paint Job Charnock's city vermillion. You must not, you cannot cross Old Court House Street without looking carefully to see that you stand no chance of being run over. This is beautiful. There is a steady roar of traffic, cut every two minutes by the deeper roll of the trams.

The driving is eccentric, not to say bad, but there is the traffic—more that unsophisticated eyes have beheld for a certain number of years. It means business, it means money-making, it means crowded and hurrying life, and it gets into the blood and makes it move. Here be big shops with plate-glass fronts—all displaying the well-known names of firms that we savages only correspond with through the V. P. P. and Parcels Post. They are all here, as large as life, ready to supply anything you need if you only care to sign. Great is the fascination of being able to obtain a thing on the spot without having to write for a week and wait for a month, and then get something quite different. No wonder pretty ladies, who live anywhere within a reasonable distance, come down to do their shopping personally.

"Look here. If you want to be respectable you mustn't smoke in the streets. Nobody does it." This is advice kindly tendered by a friend in a black coat. There is no Levée or Lieutenant-Governor in sight; but he wears the frock-coat because it is daylight, and he can be seen. He also refrains from smoking for the same reason. He admits that Providence built the open air to be smoked in, but he says that "it isn't the thing." This man has a brougham, a remarkably natty little pill-box with a curious wabble about

the wheels. He steps into the brougham and puts on—a top hat, a shiny black "plug."

There was a man up-country once who owned a top-hat. He leased it to amateur theatrical companies for some seasons until the nap wore off. Then he threw it into a tree and wild bees hived in it. Men were wont to come and look at the hat, in its palmy days, for the sake of feeling homesick. It interested all the station, and died with two seers of *babul* flower honey in its bosom. But top-hats are not intended to be worn in India. They are as sacred as home letters and old rosebuds. The friend cannot see this. He allows that if he stepped out of his brougham and walked about in the sunshine for ten minutes he would get a bad headache. In half-an-hour he would probably catch sunstroke. He allows all this, but he keeps to his hat and cannot see why a barbarian is moved to inextinguishable laughter at the sight. Every one who owns a brougham and many people who hire *ticca-gharris* keep top-hats and black frock-coats. The effect is curious, and at first fills the beholder with surprise.

And now, "let us see the handsome houses where the wealthy nobles dwell." Northerly lies the great human jungle of the native city, stretching from Burra Bazar to Chitpore. That can keep. Southerly is the *maidan* and Chouringhi

"If you get out into the centre of the *maidan* you will understand why Calcutta is called the City of Palaces." The traveled American said so at the Great Eastern. There is a short tower, falsely called a "memorial," standing in a waste of soft, sour green. That is as good a place to get to as any other. Near here the newly-landed waler is taught the whole duty of the trap-horse and careers madly in a brake. Near here young Calcutta gets upon a horse and is incontinently run away with. Near here hundreds of kine feed, close to the innumerable trams and the whirl of traffic along the face of Chouringhi Road. The size of the *maidan* takes the heart out of any one accustomed to the "gardens" of up-country, just as they say Newmarket Heath cows a horse accustomed to more shut-in course. The huge level is studded with brazen statues of eminent gentlemen riding fretful horses on diabolically severe curbs. The expanse dwarfs the statues, dwarfs everything except the frontage of the far-away Chouringhi Road. It is big—it is impressive. There is no escaping the fact. They built houses in the old days when the rupee was two shillings and a penny. Those houses are three-storied, and ornamented with service-staircases like houses in the Hills. They are also very close together, and they own garden walls of *pukka*-masonry pierced with a single gate. In their

shut-upness they are British. In their spaciousness they are Oriental, but those service-stair-cases do not look healthy. We will form an amateur sanitary commission and call upon Chouringhi.

A first introduction to the Calcutta *durwan* is not nice. If he is chewing *pan*, he does not take the trouble to get rid of his quid. If he is sitting on his *charpoy* chewing sugarcane, he does not think it worth his while to rise. He has to be taught those things, and he cannot understand why he should be reproved. Clearly he is a survival of a played-out system. Providence never intended that any native should be made a *concierge* more insolent than any of the French variety. The people of Calcutta put an Uria in a little lodge close to the gate of their house, in order that loafers may be turned away, and the houses protected from theft. The natural result is that the *durwan* treats everybody whom he does not know as a loafer, has an intimate and vendible knowledge of all the outgoings and incomings in that house, and controls, to a large extent, the nomination of the *naukar-log*. They say that one of the estimable class is now suing a bank for about three lakhs of rupees. Up-country, a Lieutenant-Governor's *chaprissi* has to work for thirty years before he can retire on seventy thousand rupees of savings. The Calcutta *durwan* is a great institution. The head

and front of his offence is that he will insist upon trying to talk English. How he protects the houses Calcutta only knows. He can be frightened out of his wits by severe speech, and is generally asleep in calling hours. If a rough round of visits be any guide, three times out of seven he is fragrant of drink. So much for the *durwan*. Now for the houses he guards.

Very pleasant is the sensation of being ushered into a pestiferously stablesome drawing-room. "Does this always happen?" "No, not unless you shut up the room for some time; but if you open the *jhilmills* there are other smells. You see the stables and the servants' quarters are close too." People pay five hundred a month for half-a-dozen rooms filled with *attr* of this kind. They make no complaint. When they think the honor of the city is at stake they say defiantly: "Yes, but you must remember we're a metropolis. We are crowded here. We have no room. We aren't like your little stations." Chouringhi is a stately place full of sumptuous houses, but it is best to look at it hastily. Stop to consider for a moment what the cramped compounds, the black soaked soil, the netted intricacies, of the service-staircases, the packed stables, the seethment of human life round the *durwans'* lodges and the curious arrangement of little open drains means, and you will call it a whited sepulchre.

Men living in expensive tenements suffer from chronic sore-throat, and will tell you cheerily that "we've got typhoid in Calcutta now." Is the pest ever out of it? Everything seems to be built with a view to its comfort. It can lodge comfortably on roofs, climb along from the gutter-pipe to piazza, or rise from sink to veranda and thence to the topmost story. But Calcutta says that all is sound and produces figures to prove it; at the same time admitting that healthy cut flesh will not readily heal. Further evidence may be dispensed with.

Here come pouring down Park Street on the *maidan* a rush of broughams, neat buggies, the lightest of gigs, trim office brownberrys, shining victorias, and a sprinkling of veritable hansom cabs. In the broughams sit men in top-hats. In the other carts, young men, all very much alike, and all immaculately turned out. A fresh stream from Chouringhi joins the Park Street detachment, and the two together stream away across the *maidan* toward the business quarter of the city. This is Calcutta going to office—the civilians to the Government Buildings and the young men to their firms and their blocks and their wharves. Here one sees that Calcutta has the best turn-out in the Empire. Horses and traps alike are enviably perfect, and—mark the touchstone of civilization—*the lamps are in the*

sockets. This is distinctly refreshing. Once more we will take off our hats to Calcutta, the well-appointed, the luxurious. The country-bred is a rare beast here; his place is taken by the waler, and the waler, though a ruffian at heart, can be made to look like a gentleman. It would be indecorous as well as insane to applaud the winking harness, the perfectly lacquered panels, and the liveried *saises.* They show well in the outwardly fair roads shadowed by the Palaces.

How many sections of the complex society of the place do the carts carry? *Imprimis*, the Bengal Civilian who goes to Writers' Buildings and sits in a perfect office and speaks flippantly of "sending things into India," meaning thereby the Supreme Government. He is a great person, and his mouth is full of promotion-and-appointment "shop." Generally he is referred to as a "rising man." Calcutta seems full of "rising men." *Secondly*, the Government of India man, who wears a familiar Simla face, rents a flat when he is not up in the Hills, and is rational on the subject of the drawbacks of Calcutta. *Thirdly*, the man of the "firms," the pure non-official who fights under the banner of one of the great houses of the City, or for his own hand in a neat office, or dashes about Clive Street in a brougham doing "share work" or something of the

kind. He fears not "Bengal," nor regards he "India." He swears impartially at both when their actions interfere with his operations. His "shop" is quite unintelligible. He is like the English city man with the chill off, lives well and entertains hospitably. In the old days he was greater than he is now, but still he bulks large. He is rational in so far that he will help the abuse of the Municipality, but womanish in his insistence on the excellencies of Calcutta. Over and above these who are hurrying to work are the various brigades, squads and detachments of the other interests. But they are sets and not sections, and revolve round Belvedere, Government House, and Fort William. Simla and Darjeeling claim them in the hot weather. Let them go. They wear top-hats and frock-coats.

It is time to escape from Chouringhi Road and get among the long-shore folk, who have no prejudices against tobacco, and who all use pretty nearly the same sort of hat.

CHAPTER III

THE COUNCIL OF THE GODS

He set up conclusions to the number of nine thousand seven hundred and sixty four . . . he went afterward to the Sorbonne, where he maintained argument against the theologians for the space of six weeks, from four o'clock in the morning till six in the evening, except for an interval of two hours to refresh themselves and take their repasts, and at this were present the greatest part of the lords of the court the masters of request, presidents, counsellors, those of the accompts, secretaries, advocates, and others; as also the sheriffs of the said town.—*Pantagruel.*

"THE Bengal Legislative Council is sitting now. You will find it in an octagonal wing of Writers' Buildings: straight across the *maidan*. It's worth seeing." "What are they sitting on?" "Municipal business. No end of a debate." So much for trying to keep low company. The long-shore loafers must stand over. Without doubt this Council is going to hang some one for the state of the City, and Sir Steuart Bayley will be chief executioner. One does not come across Councils every day.

Writers' Buildings are large. You can trouble the busy workers of half-a-dozen departments before you stumble upon the black-stained stair-

case that leads to an upper chamber looking out over a populous street. Wild *chaprissis* block the way. The Councillor Sahibs are sitting, but any one can enter. "To the right of the Lât Sahib's chair, and go quietly." Ill-mannered minion! Does he expect the awe-stricken spectator to prance in with a jubilant war-whoop or turn Catherine-wheels round that sumptuous octagonal room with the blue-domed roof? There are gilt capitals to the half pillars and an Egyptian patterned lotus-stencil makes the walls decorously gay. A thick piled carpet covers all the floor, and must be delightful in the hot weather. On a black wooden throne, comfortably cushioned in green leather, sits Sir Steuart Bayley, Ruler of Bengal. The rest are all great men, or else they would not be there. Not to know them argues oneself unknown. There are a dozen of them, and sit six aside at two slightly curved lines of beautifully polished desks. Thus Sir Steuart Bayley occupies the frog of a badly made horseshoe split at the toe. In front of him, at a table covered with books and pamphlets and papers, toils a secretary. There is a seat for the Reporters, and that is all. The place enjoys a chastened gloom, and its very atmosphere fills one with awe. This is the heart of Bengal, and uncommonly well upholstered. If the work matches the first-class furniture, the

inkpots, the carpet, and the resplendent ceiling, there will be something worth seeing. But where is the criminal who is to be hanged for the stench that runs up and down Writers' Buildings staircases, for the rubbish heaps in the Chitpore Road, for the sickly savor of Chouringhi, for the dirty little tanks at the back of Belvedere, for the street full of smallpox, for the reeking gharri-stand outside the Great Eastern, for the state of the stone and dirt pavements, for the condition of the gullies of Shampooker, and for a hundred other things?

"This, I submit, is an artificial scheme in supersession of Nature's unit, the individual." The speaker is a slight, spare native in a flat hat-turban, and a black alpaca frock-coat. He looks like a *vakil* to the boot-heels, and, with his unvarying smile and regulated gesticulation, recalls memories of up-country courts. He never hesitates, is never at a loss for a word, and never in one sentence repeats himself. He talks and talks and talks in a level voice, rising occasionally half an octave when a point has to be driven home. Some of his periods sound very familiar. This, for instance, might be a sentence from the *Mirror:* "So much for the principle. Let us now examine how far it is supported by precedent." This sounds bad. When a fluent native is discoursing of "principles" and "prec-

cedents," the chances are that he will go on for some time. Moreover, where is the criminal, and what is all this talk about abstractions? They want shovels not sentiments, in this part of the world.

A friendly whisper brings enlightenment: "They are plowing through the Calcutta Municipal Bill—plurality of votes you know; here are the papers." And so it is! A mass of motions and amendments on matters relating to ward votes. Is *A* to be allowed to give two votes in one ward and one in another? Is section ten to be omitted, and is one man to be allowed one vote and no more? How many votes does three hundred rupees' worth of landed property carry? Is it better to kiss a post or throw it in the fire? Not a word about carbolic acid and gangs of *domes.* The little man in the black *choga* revels in his subject. He is great on principles and precedents, and the necessity of "popularizing our system." He fears that under certain circumstances "the status of the candidates will decline." He riots in "self-adjusting majorities," and the healthy influence of the educated middle classes.

For a practical answer to this, there steals across the council chamber just one faint whiff. It is as though some one laughed low and bitterly. But no man heeds. The Englishmen look supremely bored, the native members stare stolidly in front

of them. Sir Steuart Bayley's face is as set as the face of the Sphinx. For these things he draws his pay, and his is a low wage for heavy labor. But the speaker, now adrift, is not altogether to be blamed. He is a Bengali, who has got before him just such a subject as his soul loveth—an elaborate piece of academical reform leading no-whither. Here is a quiet room full of pens and papers, and there are men who must listen to him. Apparently there is no time limit to the speeches. Can you wonder that he talks? He says "I submit" once every ninety seconds, varying the form with "I do submit." The popular element in the electoral body should have prominence. Quite so. He quotes one John Stuart Mill to prove it. There steals over the listener a numbing sense of nightmare. He has heard all this before somewhere—yea; even down to J. S. Mill and the references to the "true interests of the ratepayers." He sees what is coming next. Yes, there is the old Sabha Anjuman journalistic formula—"Western education is an exotic plant of recent importation." How on earth did this man drag Western education into this discussion? Who knows? Perhaps Sir Steuart Bayley does. He seems to be listening. The others are looking at their watches. The spell of the level voice sinks the listener yet deeper into a trance. He is haunted by the ghosts of all the

cant of all the political platforms of Great Britain. He hears all the old, old vestry phrases, and once more he smells the smell. *That* is no dream. Western education is an exotic plant. It is the upas tree, and it is all our fault. We brought it out from England exactly as we brought out the ink bottles and the patterns for the chairs. We planted it and it grew—monstrous as a banian. Now we are choked by the roots of it spreading so thickly in this fat soil of Bengal. The speaker continues. Bit by bit. We builded this dome, visible and invisible, the crown of Writers' Buildings, as we have built and peopled the buildings. Now we have gone too far to retreat, being "tied and bound with the chain of our own sins. "The speech continues. We made that florid sentence. That torrent of verbiage is ours. We taught him what was constitutional and what was unconstitutional in the days when Calcutta smelt. Calcutta smells still, but we must listen to all that he has to say about the plurality of votes and the threshing of wind and the weaving of ropes of sand. It is our own fault absolutely.

The speech ends, and there rises a grey Englishman in a black frock-coat. He looks a strong man, and a worldly. Surely he will say: "Yes, Lala Sahib, all this may be true talk, but there's a *burra krab* smell in this place, and everything must be *safkaroed* in a week, or the Deputy

Commissioner will not take any notice of you in *durbar*." He says nothing of the kind. This is a Legislative Council, where they call each other "Honorable So-and-So's." The Englishman in the frock-coat begs all to remember that "we are discussing principles, and no consideration of the details ought to influence the verdict on the principles." Is he then like the rest? How does this strange thing come about? Perhaps these so English office fittings are responsible for the warp. The Council Chamber might be a London Board-room. Perhaps after long years among the pens and papers its occupants grow to think that it really is, and in this belief give *résumés* of the history of Local Self-Government in England.

The black frock-coat, emphasizing his points with his spectacle-case, is telling his friends how the parish was first the unit of self-government. He then explains how burgesses were elected, and in tones of deep fervor announces: "Commissioners of Sewers are elected in the same way." Whereunto all this lecture? Is he trying to run a motion through under cover of a cloud of words, essaying the well-known "cuttle-fish trick" of the West?

He abandons England for a while, and *now* we get a glimpse of the cloven hoof in a casual reference to Hindus and Mahomedans. The Hindus

will lose nothing by the complete establishment of plurality of votes. They will have the control of their own wards as they used to have. So there is race-feeling, to be explained away, even among these beautiful desks. Scratch the Council, and you come to the old, old trouble. The black frock-coat sits down, and a keen-eyed, black-bearded Englishman rises with one hand in his pocket to explain his views on an alteration of the vote qualification. The idea of an amendment seems to have just struck him. He hints that he will bring it forward later on. He is academical like the others, but not half so good a speaker. All this is dreary beyond words. Why do they talk and talk about owners and occupiers and burgesses in England and the growth of autonomous institutions when the city, the great city, is here crying out to be cleansed? What has England to do with Calcutta's evil, and why should Englishmen be forced to wander through mazes of unprofitable argument against men who cannot understand the iniquity of dirt?

A pause follows the black-bearded man's speech. Rises another native, a heavily-built Babu, in a black gown and a strange head-dress. A snowy white strip of cloth is thrown *jharun*-wise over his shoulders. His voice is high, and not always under control. He begins: "I will

try to be as brief as possible." This is ominous. By the way, in Council there seems to be no necessity for a form of address. The orators plunge in *medias res*, and only when they are well launched throw an occasional "Sir" toward Sir Steuart Bayley, who sits with one leg doubled under him and a dry pen in his hand. This speaker is no good. He talks, but he says nothing, and he only knows where he is drifting to. He says: "We must remember that we are legislating for the Metropolis of India, and therefore we should borrow our institutions from large English towns, and not from parochial institutions." If you think for a minute, that shows a large and healthy knowledge of the history of Local Self-Government. It also reveals the attitude of Calcutta. If the city thought less about itself as a metropolis and more as a midden, its state would be better. The speaker talks patronizingly of "my friend," alluding to the black frock-coat. Then he flounders afresh, and his voice gallops up the gamut as he declares, "and therefore that makes all the difference." He hints vaguely at threats, something to do with the Hindus and the Mahomedans, but what he means it is difficult to discover. Here, however, is a sentence taken *verbatim*. It is not likely to appear in this form in the Calcutta papers. The black frock-coat had said that if a wealthy na-

tive "had eight votes to his credit, his vanity would prompt him to go to the polling-booth, because he would feel better than half-a-dozen *gharri-wans* or petty traders." (Fancy allowing a *gharri-wan* to vote! He has yet to learn how to drive!) Hereon the gentleman with the white cloth: "Then the complaint is that influential voters will not take the trouble to vote. In my humble opinion, if that be so, adopt voting papers. *That* is the way to meet them. In the same way—The Calcutta Trades' Association—you abolish all plurality of votes: and that is the way to meet *them*." Lucid, is it not? Up flies the irresponsible voice, and delivers this statement: "In the election for the House of Commons plurality are allowed for persons having interest in different districts." Then hopeless, hopeless fog. It is a great pity that India ever heard of anybody higher than the heads of the Civil Service. The country appeals from the *Chota* to the *Burra Sahib* all too readily as it is. Once more a whiff. The gentleman gives a defiant jerk of his shoulder-cloth, and sits down.

Then Sir Steuart Bayley: "The question before the Council is," etc. There is a ripple of "Ayes" and "Noes," and the "Noes" have it, whatever it may be. The black-bearded gentleman springs his amendment about the voting qualifications. A large senator in a white waistcoat, and with a

most genial smile, rises and proceeds to smash up the amendment. Can't see the use of it. Calls it in effect rubbish. The black frock-coat rises to explain his friend's amendment, and incidentally makes a funny little slip. He is a knight, and his friend has been newly knighted. He refers to him as "Mister." The black *choga*, he who spoke first of all, speaks again, and talks of the "*sojorner* who comes here for a little time, and then leaves the land." Well it is for the black *choga* that the sojourner does come, or there would be no comfy places wherein to talk about the power that can be measured by wealth and the intellect "which, sir, I submit, cannot be so measured." The amendment is lost, and trebly and quadruply lost is the listener. In the name of sanity and to preserve the tattered shirt tails of a torn illusion, let us escape. This is the Calcutta Municipal Bill. They have been at it for several Saturdays. Last Saturday Sir Steuart Bayley pointed out that at their present rate they would be about two years in getting it through. Now they will sit till dusk, unless Sir Steuart Bayley, who wants to see Lord Connemara off, puts up the black frock-coat to move an adjournment. It is not good to see a Government close to. This leads to the formation of blatantly self-satisfied judgments, which may be quite as wrong as the cramping system with which we have en-

compassed ourselves. And in the streets outside Englishmen summarize the situation brutally, thus: "The whole thing is a farce. Time is money to us. We can't stick out those everlasting speeches in the municipality. The natives choke us off, but we know that if things get too bad the Government will step in and interfere, and so we worry along somehow." Meantime Calcutta continues to cry out for the bucket and the broom.

CHAPTER IV

ON THE BANKS OF THE HUGLI

THE clocks of the city have struck two. Where can a man get food? Calcutta is not rich in respect of dainty accommodation. You can stay your stomach at Peliti's or Bonsard's, but their shops are not to be found in Hasting Street, or in the places where brokers fly to and fro in office-jauns, sweating and growing visibly *rich*. There must be some sort of entertainment where sailors congregate. "Honest Bombay Jack" supplies nothing but Burma cheroots and whisky in liquor-glasses, but in Lal Bazar, not far from "The Sailors' Coffee-rooms," a board gives bold advertisement that "officers and seamen can find good quarters." In evidence a row of neat officers and seamen are sitting on a bench by the "hotel" door smoking. There is an almost military likeness in their clothes. Perhaps "Honest Bombay Jack" only keeps one kind of felt hat and one brand of suit. When Jack of the mercantile marine is sober, he is very sober. When he is drunk he is—but ask the river police what a lean, mad Yankee can do with his nails and teeth. These gentlemen smoking on the bench are impassive

almost as Red Indians. Their attitudes are unrestrained, and they do not wear braces. Nor, it would appear from the bill of fare, are they particular as to what they eat when they attend *table d'hôte*. The fare is substantial and the regulation peg—every house has its own depth of peg if you will refrain from stopping Ganymede—something to wonder at. Three fingers and a trifle over seems to be the use of the officers and seamen who are talking so quietly in the doorway. One says—he has evidently finished a long story—"and so he shipped for four pound ten with a first mate's certificate and all, and that was in a German barque." Another spits with conviction and says genially, without raising his voice: "That was a hell of a ship; who knows her?" No answer from the *panchayet*, but a Dane or a German wants to know whether the *Myra* is "up" yet. A dry, red-haired man gives her exact position in the river—(How in the world can he know?)—and the probable hour of her arrival. The grave debate drifts into a discussion of a recent river accident, whereby a big steamer was damaged, and had to put back and discharge cargo. A burly gentleman who is taking a constitutional down Lal Bazar strolls up and says: "I tell you she fouled her own chain with her own forefoot. Hev you seen the plates?" "No." Then how the —— can any —— like you —— say

what it —— well was?" He passes on, having delivered his highly-flavored opinion without heat or passion. No one seems to resent the expletives.

Let us get down to the river and see this stamp of men more thoroughly. Clarke Russell has told us that their lives are hard enough in all conscience. What are their pleasures and diversions? The Port Office, where lives the gentlemen who make improvements in the Port of Calcutta, ought to supply information. It stands large and fair, and built in an orientalized manner after the Italians at the corner of Fairlie Place upon the great Strand Road, and a continual clamor of traffic by land and by sea goes up throughout the day and far into the night against its windows. This is a place to enter more reverently than the Bengal Legislative Council, for it houses the direction of the uncertain Hugli down to the Sandheads, owns enormous wealth, and spends huge sums on the frontaging of river banks, the expansion of jetties, and the manufacture of docks costing two hundred lakhs of rupees. Two million tons of sea-going shippage yearly find their way up and down the river by the guidance of the Port Office, and the men of the Port Office know more than it is good for men to hold in their heads. They can without reference to telegraphic bulletins give the posi-

tion of all the big steamers, coming up or going down, from the Hugli to the sea, day by day with their tonnage, the names of their captains and the nature of their cargo. Looking out from the veranda of their officer over a lancer-regiment of masts, they can declare truthfully the name of every ship within eye-scope, with the day and hour when she will depart.

In a room at the bottom of the building lounge big men, carefully dressed. Now there is a type of face which belongs almost exclusively to Bengal Cavalry officers—majors for choice. Everybody knows the bronzed, black-moustached, clear-speaking Native Cavalry officer. He exists unnaturally in novels, and naturally on the frontier. These men in the big room have its caste of face so strongly marked that one marvels what officers are doing by the river. "Have they come to book passengers for home?" "Those men! They're pilots. Some of them draw between two and three thousand rupees a month. They are responsible for half-a-million pounds' worth of cargo sometimes." They certainly are men, and they carry themselves as such. They confer together by twos and threes, and appeal frequently to shipping lists.

"*Isn't* a pilot a man who always wears a pea-jacket and shouts through a speaking-trumpet?" "Well, you can ask those gentlemen if you like.

You've got your notions from home pilots. Ours aren't that kind exactly. They are a picked service, as carefully weeded as the Indian Civil. Some of 'em have brothers in it, and some belong to the old Indian army families." But they are not all equally well paid. The Calcutta papers sometimes echo the groans of the junior pilots who are not allowed the handling of ships over a certain tonnage. As it is yearly growing cheaper to build one big steamer than two little ones, these juniors are crowded out, and, while the seniors get their thousands, some of the youngsters make at the end of one month exactly thirty rupees. This is a grievance with them; and it seems well-founded.

In the flats above the pilots' room are hushed and chapel-like offices, all sumptuously fitted, where Englishmen write and telephone and telegraph, and deft Babus forever draw maps of the shifting Hugli. Any hope of understanding the work of the Port Commissioners is thoroughly dashed by being taken through the Port maps of a quarter of a century past. Men have played with the Hugli as children play with a gutter-runnel, and, in return, the Hugli once rose and played with men and ships till the Strand Road was littered with the raffle and the carcasses of big ships. There are photos on the walls of the cyclone of '64, when the *Thunder* came inland

and sat upon an American barque, obstructing all the traffic. Very curious are these photos, and almost impossible to believe. How can a big, strong steamer have her three masts razed to deck level? How can a heavy, country boat be pitched on to the poop of a high-walled liner? and how can the side be bodily torn out of a ship? The photos say that all these things are possible, and men aver that a cyclone may come again and scatter the craft like chaff. Outside the Port Office are the export and import sheds, buildings that can hold a ship's cargo a-piece, all standing on reclaimed ground. Here be several strong smells, a mass of railway lines, and a multitude of men. "Do you see where that trolly is standing, behind the big P. and O. berth? In that place as nearly as may be the *Govindpur* went down about twenty years ago, and began to shift out!" "But that is solid ground." "She sank there, and the next tide made a scour-hole on one side of her. The returning tide knocked her into it. Then the mud made up behind her. Next tide the business was repeated—always the scour-hole in the mud and the filling up behind her. So she rolled and was pushed out and out until she got in the way of the shipping right out yonder, and we had to blow her up. When a ship sinks in mud or quicksand she regularly digs her own grave and wriggles herself into it

deeper and deeper till she reaches moderately solid stuff. Then she sticks." Horrible idea, is it not, to go down and down with each tide into the foul Hugli mud?

Close to the Port Offices is the Shipping Office, where the captains engage their crews. The men must produce their discharges from their last ships in the presence of the shipping master, or as they call him—"The Deputy Shipping." He passes them as correct after having satisfied himself that they are not deserters from other ships, and they then sign articles for the voyage. This is the ceremony, beginning with the "dearly beloved" of the crew-hunting captain down to the "amazement" of the identified deserter. There is a dingy building, next door to the Sailors' Home, at whose gate stand the cast-ups of all the seas in all manner of raiment. There are Seedee boys, Bombay *serangs* and Madras fishermen of the salt villages, Malays who insist upon marrying native women grow jealous and run *amok:* Malay-Hindus, Hindu-Malay-whites, Burmese, Burma-whites, Burma-native-whites, Italians with gold earrings and a thirst for gambling, Yankees of all the States, with Mulattoes and pure buck-niggers, red and rough Danes, Cingalese, Cornish boys who seem fresh taken from the plough-tail "corn-stalks from colonial ships where they got four pound ten a month

as seamen, tun-bellied Germans, Cockney mates keeping a little aloof from the crowd and talking in knots together, unmistakable "Tommies" who have tumbled into seafaring life by some mistake, cockatoo-tufted Welshmen spitting and swearing like cats, broken-down loafers, grey-headed, penniless, and pitiful, swaggering boys, and very quiet men with gashes and cuts on their faces. It is an ethnological museum where all the specimens are playing comedies and tragedies. The head of it all is the "Deputy Shipping," and he sits, supported by an English policeman whose fists are knobby, in a great Chair of State. The "Deputy Shipping" knows all the iniquity of the riverside, all the ships, all the captains, and a fair amount of the men. He is fenced off from the crowd by a strong wooden railing, behind which are gathered those who "stand and wait," the unemployed of the mercantile marine. They have had their spree—poor devils—and now they will go to sea again on as low a wage as three pound ten a month, to fetch up at the end in some Shanghai stew or San Francisco hell. They have turned their backs on the seductions of the Howrah boarding-houses and the delights of Colootollah. If Fate will, "Nightingales" will know them no more for a season, and their successors may paint Collinga Bazar vermilion. But what captain will take

some of these battered, shattered wrecks whose hands shake and whose eyes are red?

Enter suddenly a bearded captain, who has made his selection from the crowd on a previous day, and now wants to get his men passed. He is not fastidious in his choice. His eleven seem a tough lot for such a mild-eyed, civil-spoken man to manage. But the captain in the Shipping Office and the captain on the ship are two different things. He brings his crew up to the "Deputy Shipping's" bar, and hands in their greasy, tattered discharges. But the heart of the "Deputy Shipping" is hot within him, because, two days ago, a Howrah crimp stole a whole crew from a down-dropping ship, insomuch that the captain had to come back and whip up a new crew at one o'clock in the day. Evil will it be if the "Deputy Shipping" finds one of these bounty-jumpers in the chosen crew of the *Blenkindoon*, let us say.

The "Deputy Shipping" tells the story with heat. "I didn't know they did such things in Calcutta," says the captain. "Do such things! They'd steal the eye-teeth out of your head there, Captain." He picks up a discharge and calls for Michael Donelly, who is a loose-knit, vicious-looking Irish-American who chews. "Stand up, man, stand up!" Michael Donelly wants to lean against the desk, and the English policeman won't

have it. "What was your last ship?" "*Fairy Queen.*" "When did you leave her?" "'Bout 'leven days." "Captain's name?" "Flahy." "That'll do. Next man: Jules Anderson." Jules Anderson is a Dane. His statements tally with the discharge-certificate of the United States, as the Eagle attesteth. He is passed and falls back. Slivey, the Englishman, and David, a huge plum-colored negro who ships as cook are also passed. Then comes Bassompra, a little Italian, who speaks English. "What's your last ship?" "*Ferdinand.*" "No, after that?" "German barque." Bassompra does not look happy. "When did she sail?" "About three weeks ago." "What's her name?" "*Haidée.*" "You deserted from her?" "Yes, but she's left port." The "Deputy Shipping" runs rapidly through a shipping-list, throws it down with a bang. "'Twon't do. No German barque *Haidée* here for three months. How do I know you don't belong to the *Jackson's* crew? Cap'ain, I'm afraid you'll have to ship another man. He must stand over. Take the rest away and make 'em sign."

The bead-eyed Bassompra seems to have lost his chance of a voyage, and his case will be inquired into. The captain departs with his men and they sign articles for the voyage, while the "Deputy Shipping" tells strange tales of the sailorman's life. "They'll quit a good ship for

the sake of a spree, and catch on again at three pound ten, and by Jove, they'll let their skippers pay 'em at ten rupees to the sovereign—poor beggars! As soon as the money's gone they'll ship, but not before. Every one under rank of captain engages here. The competition makes first mates ship sometimes for five pounds or as low as four ten a month." (The gentleman in the boarding-house was right, you see.) "A first mate's wages are seven ten or eight, and foreign captains ship for twelve pounds a month and bring their own small stores—everything, that is to say, except beef, peas, flour, coffee and molasses."

These things are not pleasant to listen to while the hungry-eyed men in the bad clothes lounge and scratch and loaf behind the railing. What comes to them in the end? They die, it seems, though that is not altogether strange. They die at sea in strange and horrible ways; they die, a few of them, in the Kintals, being lost and suffocated in the great sink of Calcutta; they die in strange places by the water-side, and the Hugli takes them away under the mooring chains and the buoys, and casts them up on the sands below, if the River Police have missed the capture. They sail the sea because they must live; and there is no end to their toil. Very, very few find haven of any kind, and the earth, whose ways

they do not understand, is cruel to them, when they walk upon it to drink and be merry after the manner of beasts. Jack ashore is a pretty thing when he is in a book or in the blue jacket of the Navy. Mercantile Jack is not so lovely. Later on, we will see where his "sprees" lead him.

CHAPTER V

WITH THE CALCUTTA POLICE

"The City was of Night—perchance of Death,
But certainly of Night."
—*The City of Dreadful Night.*

In the beginning, the Police were responsible. They said in a patronizing way that, merely as a matter of convenience, they would prefer to take a wanderer round the great city themselves, sooner than let him contract a broken head on his own account in the slums. They said that there were places and places where a white man, unsupported by the arm of the law, would be robbed and mobbed; and that there were other places where drunken seamen would make it very unpleasant for him. There was a night fixed for the patrol, but apologies were offered beforehand for the comparative insignificance of the tour.

"Come up to the fire lookout in the first place, and then you'll be able to see the city." This was at No. 22, Lal Bazar, which is the headquarters of the Calcutta Police, the centre of the

great web of telephone wires where Justice sits all day and all night looking after one million people and a floating population of one hundred thousand. But her work shall be dealt with later on. The fire lookout is a little sentry-box on the top of the three-storied police offices. Here a native watchman waits always, ready to give warning to the brigade below if the smoke rises by day or the flames by night in any ward of the city. From this eyrie, in the warm night, one hears the heart of Calcutta beating. Northward, the city stretches away three long miles, with three more miles of suburbs beyond, to Dum-Dum and Barrackpore. The lamplit dusk on this side is full of noises and shouts and smells. Close to the Police Office, jovial mariners at the sailors' coffee-shop are roaring hymns. Southerly, the city's confused lights give place to the orderly lamp-rows of the *maidan* and Chouringhi, where the respectabilities live and the Police have very little to do. From the east goes up to the sky the clamor of Sealdah, the rumble of the trams, and the voices of all Bow Bazar chaffering and making merry. Westward are the business quarters, hushed now, the lamps of the shipping on the river, and the twinkling lights on the Howrah side. It is a wonderful sight—this Pisgah view of a huge city resting after the labors of the day. "Does the noise of

traffic go on all through the hot weather?" "Of course. The hot months are the busiest in the year and money's tightest. You should see the brokers cutting about at that season. Calcutta *can't* stop, my dear sir." "What happens then?" "Nothing happens; the death-rate goes up a little. That's all!" Even in February, the weather would, up-country, be called muggy and stifling, but Calcutta is convinced that it is her cold season. The noises of the city grow perceptibly; it is the night side of Calcutta waking up and going abroad. Jack in the sailors' coffee-shop is singing joyously: "Shall we gather at the River—the beautiful, the beautiful, the River?" What an incongruity there is about his selections. However, that it amuses before it shocks the listeners, is not to be doubted. An Englishman, far from his native land is liable to become careless, and it would be remarkable if he did otherwise in ill-smelling Calcutta. There is a clatter of hoofs in the courtyard below. Some of the Mounted Police have come in from somewhere or other out of the great darkness. A clog-dance of iron hoof follows, and an Englishman's voice is heard soothing an agitated horse who seems to be standing on his hind legs. Some of the Mounted Police are going out into the great darkness. "What's on?" "Walk round at Government House. The

Reserve men are being formed up below. They're calling the roll." The Reserve men are all English, and big English at that. They form up and tramp out of the courtyard to line Government Place, and see that Mrs. Lollipop's brougham does not get smashed up by Sirdar Chuckerbutty Bahadur's lumbering C-spring barouche with the two raw Walers. Very military men are the Calcutta European Police in their set-up, and he who knows their composition knows some startling stories of gentlemen-rankers and the like. They are, despite the wearing climate they work in and the wearing work they do, as fine five-score of Englishmen as you shall find east of Suez.

Listen for a moment from the fire lookout to the voices of the night, and you will see why they must be so. Two thousand sailors of fifty nationalities are adrift in Calcutta every Sunday, and of these perhaps two hundred are distinctly the worse for liquor. There is a mild row going on, even now, somewhere at the back of Bow Bazar, which at nightfall fills with sailor-men who have a wonderful gift of falling foul of the native population. To keep the Queen's peace is of course only a small portion of Police duty, but it is trying. The burly president of the lock-up for European drunks—Calcutta central lock-up is worth seeing—rejoices in a sprained thumb just

now, and has to do his work left-handed in consequence. But his left hand is a marvelously persuasive one, and when on duty his sleeves are turned up to the shoulder that the jovial mariner may see that there is no deception. The president's labors are handicapped in that the road of sin to the lock-up runs through a grimy little garden—the brick paths are worn deep with the tread of many drunken feet—where a man can give a great deal of trouble by sticking his toes into the ground and getting mixed up with the shrubs. "A straight run in" would be much more convenient both for the president and the drunk. Generally speaking—and here Police experience is pretty much the same all over the civilized world—a woman drunk is a good deal worse than a man drunk. She scratches and bites like a Chinaman and swears like several fiends. Strange people may be unearthed in the lock-ups. Here is a perfectly true story, not three weeks old. A visitor, an unofficial one, wandered into the native side of the spacious accommodation provided for those who have gone or done wrong. A wild-eyed Babu rose from the fixed charpoy and said in the best of English: "Good-morning, sir." "*Good*-morning; who are you, and what are you in for?" Then the Babu, in one breath: "I would have you know that I do not go to prison as a criminal but as a re-

former. You've read the *Vicar of Wakefield*"? "Ye-es." "Well, *I* am the Vicar of Bengal—at least that's what I call myself." The visitor collapsed. He had not nerve enough to continue the conversation. Then said the voice of the authority: "He's down in connection with a cheating case at Serampore. May be shamming. But he'll be looked to in time."

The best place to hear about the Police is the fire lookout. From that eyrie one can see how difficult must be the work of control over the great, growling beast of a city. By all means let us abuse the Police, but let us see what the poor wretches have to do with their three thousand natives and one hundred Englishmen. From Howrah and Bally and the other suburbs at least a hundred thousand people come in to Calcutta for the day and leave at night. Also Chandernagore is handy for the fugitive law-breaker, who can enter in the evening and get away before the noon of the next day, having marked his house and broken into it.

"But how can the prevalent offence be housebreaking in a place like this?" "Easily enough. When you've seen a little of the city you'll see. Natives sleep and lie about all over the place, and whole quarters are just so many rabbit-warrens. Wait till you see the Machua Bazar. Well, besides the petty theft and burglary, we have

heavy cases of forgery and fraud, that leaves us with our wits pitted against a Bengali's. When a Bengali criminal is working a fraud of the sort he loves, he is *about* the cleverest soul you could wish for. He gives us cases a year long to unravel. Then there are the murders in the low houses—very curious things they are. You'll see the house where Sheikh Babu was murdered presently, and you'll understand. The Burra Bazar and Jora Bagan sections are the two worst ones for heavy cases; but Colootollah is the most aggravating. There's Colootollah over yonder—that patch of darkness beyond the lights. That section is full of tuppenny-ha'penny petty cases, that keep the men up all night and make 'em swear. You'll see Colootollah, and then perhaps you'll understand. Bamun Bustee is the quietest of all, and Lal Bazar and Bow Bazar, as you can see for yourself, are the rowdiest. You've no notion what the natives come to the *thannahs* for. A *naukar* will come in and want a summons against his master for refusing him half-an-hour's *chuti.* I suppose it *does* seem rather revolutionary to an up-country man, but they try to do it here. Now wait a minute, before we go down into the city and see the Fire Brigade turned out. Business is slack with them just now, but you time 'em and see." An order is given, and a bell strikes softly thrice. There is

an orderly rush of men, the click of a bolt, a red fire-engine, spitting and swearing with the sparks flying from the furnace, is dragged out of its shelter. A huge brake, which holds supplementary horses, men, and hatchets, follows, and a hose-cart is the third on the list. The men push the heavy things about as though they were pith toys. Five horses appear. Two are shot into the fire-engine, two—monsters these—into the brake, and the fifth, a powerful beast, warranted to trot fourteen miles an hour, backs into the hose-cart shafts. The men clamber up, some one says softly, "All ready there," and with an angry whistle the fire-engine, followed by the other two, flies out into Lal Bazar, the sparks trailing behind. Time—1 min. 40 secs. "They'll find out it's a false alarm, and come back again in five minutes." "Why?" "Because there will be no constables on the road to give 'em the direction of the fire, and because the driver wasn't told the ward of the outbreak when he went out!" "Do you mean to say that you can from this absurd pigeon-loft locate the wards in the nighttime?" "Of course: what would be the good of a lookout if the man couldn't tell where the fire was?" "But it's all pitchy black, and the lights are so confusing."

"Ha! Ha! You'll be more confused in ten minutes. You'll have lost your way as you never

lost it before. You're going to go round Bow Bazar section."

"And the Lord have mercy on my soul!" Calcutta, the darker portion of it, does not look an inviting place to dive into at night.

CHAPTER VI

THE CITY OF DREADFUL NIGHT

"And since they cannot spend or use aright
The little time here given them in trust,
But lavish it in weary undelight
Of foolish toil, and trouble, strife and lust—
They naturally claimeth to inherit
The Everlasting Future—that their merit
May have full scope. . . . As surely is most just."
—*The City of Dreadful Night.*

THE difficulty is to prevent this account from growing steadily unwholesome. But one cannot rake through a big city without encountering muck.

The Police kept their word. In five short minutes, as they had prophesied, their charge was lost as he had never been lost before. "Where are we now?" "Somewhere off the Chitpore Road, but you wouldn't understand if you were told. Follow now, and step pretty much where we step—there's a good deal of filth hereabouts."

The thick, greasy night shuts in everything. We have gone beyond the ancestral houses of the Ghoses of the Boses, beyond the lamps, the

smells, and the crowd of Chitpore Road, and have come to a great wilderness of packed houses —just such mysterious, conspiring tenements as Dickens would have loved. There is no breath of breeze here, and the air is perceptibly warmer. There is little regularity in the drift, and the utmost niggardliness in the spacing of what, for want of a better name, we must call the streets. If Calcutta keeps such luxuries as Commissioners of Sewers and Paving, they die before they reach this place. The air is heavy with a faint, sour stench—the essence of long-neglected abominations—and it cannot escape from among the tall, three-storied houses. "This, my dear sir, is a *perfectly* respectable quarter as quarters go. That house at the head of the alley, with the elaborate stucco-work round the top of the door, was built long ago by a celebrated midwife. Great people used to live here once. Now it's the—Aha! Look out for that carriage." A big mail-phaeton crashes out of the darkness and, recklessly driven, disappears. The wonder is how is it ever got into this maze of narrow streets, where nobody seems to be moving, and where the dull throbbing of the city's life only comes faintly and by snatches. "Now it's the what?" "St. John's Wood of Calcutta—for the rich Babus. That 'fitton' belonged to one of them." "Well, it's not much of a place to look at?" "Don't judge

by appearances. About here live the women who have beggared kings. We aren't going to let you down into unadulterated vice all at once. You must see it first with the gilding on—and mind that rotten board."

Stand at the bottom of a lift and look upward. Then you will get both the size and the design of the tiny courtyard round which one of these big dark houses is built. The central square may be perhaps ten feet every way, but the balconies that run inside it overhang, and seem to cut away half the available space. To reach the square a man must go round many corners, down a covered-in way, and up and down two or three baffling and confused steps. There are no lamps to guide, and the janitors of the establishment seem to be compelled to sleep in the passages. The central square, the *patio* or whatever it must be called, reeks with the faint, sour smell which finds its way impartially into every room. "Now you will understand," say the Police kindly, as their charge blunders, shin-first, into a well-dark winding staircase, "that these are not the sort of places to visit alone." "Who wants to? Of all the disgusting, inaccessible dens—Holy Cupid, what's this?"

A glare of light on the stair-head, a clink of innumerable bangles, a rustle of much fine gauze, and the Dainty Iniquity stands revealed, blazing

—literally blazing—with jewelery from head to foot. Take one of the fairest miniatures that the Delhi painters draw, and multiply it by ten; throw in one of Angelica Kaufmann's best portraits, and add anything that you can think of from Beckford to Lalla Rookh, and you will still fall short of the merits of that perfect face. For an instant, even the grim, professional gravity of the Police is relaxed in the presence of the Dainty Iniquity with the gems, who so prettily invites every one to be seated, and proffers such refreshments as she conceives the palates of the barbarians would prefer. Her Abigails are only one degree less gorgeous than she. Half a lakh, or fifty thousand pounds' worth—it is easier to credit the latter statement than the former—are disposed upon her little body. Each hand carries five jeweled rings which are connected by golden chains to a great jeweled boss of gold in the centre of the back of the hand. Earrings weighted with emeralds and pearls, diamond nose-rings, and how many other hundred articles make up the list of adornments. English furniture of a gorgeous and gimcrack kind, unlimited chandeliers and a collection of atrocious Continental prints—something, but not altogether, like the glazed plaques on *bon-bon* boxes—are scattered about the house, and on every landing —let us trust this is a mistake—lies, squats, or

loafs a Bengali who can talk English with unholy fluency. The recurrence suggests—only suggests, mind—a grim possibility of the affectation of excessive virtue by day, tempered with the sort of unwholesome enjoyment after dusk—this loafing and lobbying and chattering and smoking, and unless the bottles lie, tippling among the foul-tongued handmaidens of the Dainty Iniquity. How many men follow this double, deleterious sort of life? The Police are discreetly dumb.

"Now *don't* go talking about 'domiciliary visits' just because this one happens to be a pretty woman. We've *got* to know these creatures. They make the rich man and the poor spend their money; and when a man can't get money for 'em honestly, he comes under *our* notice. *Now* do you see? If there was any domiciliary 'visit' about it, the whole houseful would be hidden past our finding as soon as we turned up in the courtyard. We're friends—to a certain extent." And, indeed, it seemed no difficult thing to be friends to any extent with the Dainty Iniquity who was so surpassingly different from all that experience taught of the beauty of the East. Here was the face from which a man could write *Lalla Rookhs* by the dozen, and believe every work that he wrote. Hers was the beauty that Byron sang of when he wrote—

"Remember, if you come here alone, the chances

are that you'll be clubbed, or stuck, or, anyhow, mobbed. You'll understand that this part of the world is shut to Europeans—absolutely. Mind the steps, and follow on." The vision dies out in the smells and gross darkness of the night, in evil, time-rotten brickwork, and another wilderness of shut-up houses, wherein it seems that people do continually and feebly strum stringed instruments of a plaintive and wailsome nature.

Follows, after another plunge into a passage of a courtyard, and up a staircase, the apparition of a Fat Vice, in whom is no sort of romance, nor beauty, but unlimited coarse humor. She too is studded with jewels, and her house is even finer than the house of the other, and more infested with the extraordinary men who speak such good English and are so deferential to the Police. The Fat Vice has been a great leader of fashion in her day, and stripped a zemindar Raja to his last acre —insomuch that he ended in the House of Correction for a theft committed for her sake. Native opinion has it that she is a "monstrous well-preserved woman." On this point, as on some others, the races will agree to differ.

The scene changes suddenly as a slide in a magic lantern. Dainty Iniquity and Fat Vice slide away on a roll of streets and alleys, each more squalid than its predecessor. We are "somewhere at the back of the Machua Bazar,"

well in the heart of the city. There are no houses here—nothing but acres and acres, it seems, of foul wattle-and-dab huts, any one of which would be a disgrace to a frontier village. The whole arrangement is a neatly contrived germ and fire trap, reflecting great credit upon the Calcutta Municipality.

"What happens when these pigsties catch fire?" "They're built up again," say the Police, as though this were the natural order of things. "Land is immensely valuable here." All the more reason, then, to turn several Hausmanns loose into the city, with instructions to make barracks for the population that cannot find room in the huts and sleeps in the open ways, cherishing dogs and worse, much worse, in its unwashen bosom. "Here is a licensed coffee-shop. This is where your *naukers* go for amusement and to see nautches." There is a huge *chappar* shed, ingeniously ornamented with insecure kerosene lamps, and crammed with *gharri-wans*, *khitmatgars*, small storekeepers and the like. Never a sign of a European. Why? "Because if an Englishman messed about here, he'd get into trouble. Men don't come here unless they're drunk or have lost their way." The *gharri-wans* —they have the privilege of voting, have they not?—look peaceful enough as they squat on tables or crowd by the doors to watch the nautch

that is going forward. Five pitiful draggle-tails are huddled together on a bench under one of the lamps, while the sixth is squirming and shrieking before the impassive crowd. She sings of love as understood by the Oriental—the love that dries the heart and consumes the liver. In this place, the words that would look so well on paper, have an evil and ghastly significance. The *gharri-wans* stare or sup tumblers and cups of a filthy decoction, and the *kunchenee* howls with renewed vigor in the presence of the Police. Where the Dainty Iniquity was hung with gold and gems, she is trapped with pewter and glass; and where there was heavy embroidery on the Fat Vice's dress, defaced, stamped tinsel faithfully reduplicates the pattern on the tawdry robes of the *kunchenee.* So you see, if one cares to moralize, they are sisters of the same class.

Two or three men, blessed with uneasy consciences, have quietly slipped out of the coffee-shop into the mazes of the huts beyond. The Police laugh, and those nearest in the crowd laugh applausively, as in duty bound. Perhaps the rabbits grin uneasily when the ferret lands at the bottom of the burrow and begins to clear the warren.

"The *chandoo*-shops shut up at six, so you'll have to see opium-smoking before dark some day. No, you won't, though." The detective

nose sniffs, and the detective body makes for a half-opened door of a hut whence floats the fragrance of the black smoke. Those of the inhabitants who are able to stand promptly clear out —they have no love for the Police—and there remain only four men lying down and one standing up. This latter has a pet mongoose coiled round his neck. He speaks English fluently. Yes, he has no fear. It was a private smoking party and— "No business to-night—show how you smoke opium." "Aha! You want to see. Very good, I show. Hiya! you"—he kicks a man on the floor—"show how opium-smoking." The kickee grunts lazily and turns on his elbow. The mongoose, always keeping to the man's neck, erects every hair of its body like an angry cat, and chatters in its owner's ear. The lamp for the opium-pipe is the only one in the room, and lights a scene as wild as anything in the witches' revel; the mongoose acting as the familiar spirit. A voice from the ground says, in tones of infinite weariness: "You take *afim*, so"—a long, long pause, and another kick from the man possessed of the devil—the mongoose. "You take *afim?*" He takes a pellet of the black, treacly stuff on the end of a knitting-needle. "And light *afim*." He plunges the pellet into the night-light, where it swells and fumes greasily. "And then you put it in your

pipe." The smoking pellet is jammed into the tiny bowl of the thick, bamboo-stemmed pipe, and all speech ceases, except the unearthly noise of the mongoose. The man on the ground is sucking at his pipe, and when the smoking pellet has ceased to smoke will be half way to *Nibhan*. "Now you go," says the man with the mongoose. "I am going smoke." The hut door closes upon a red-lit view of huddled legs and bodies, and the man with the mongoose sinking, sinking onto his knees, his head bowed forward, and the little hairy devil chattering on the nape of his neck.

After this the fetid night air seems almost cool, for the hut is as hot as a furnace. "See the *pukka chandu* shops in full blast to-morrow. Now for Colootollah. Come through the huts. There is no decoration about *this* vice."

The huts now gave place to houses very tall and spacious and very dark. But for the narrowness of the streets we might have stumbled upon Chouringhi in the dark. An hour and a half has passed, and up to this time we have not crossed our trail once. "You might knock about the city for a night and never cross the same line. Recollect Calcutta isn't one of your poky up-country cities of a lakh and a half of people." "How long does it take to know it then?" "About a lifetime, and even then some of the

streets puzzle you." "How much has the head of a ward to know?" "Every house in his ward if he can, who owns it, what sort of character the inhabitants are, who are their friends, who go out and in, who loaf about the place at night, and so on and so on." "And he knows all this by night as well as by day?" "Of course. Why shouldn't he?" "No reason in the world. Only it's pitchy black just now, and I'd like to see where this alley is going to end." "Round the corner beyond that dead wall. There's a lamp there. Then you'll be able to see." A shadow flits out of a gully and disappears. "Who's that?" "Sergeant of Police just to see where we're going in case of accidents." Another shadow staggers into the darkness. "Who's *that?*" "Man from the fort or a sailor from the ships. I couldn't quite see." The Police open a shut door in a high wall, and stumble unceremoniously among a gang of women cooking their food. The floor is of beaten earth, the steps that lead into the upper stories are unspeakably grimy, and the heat is the heat of April. The women rise hastily, and the light of the bull's eye—for the Police have now lighted a lantern in regular "rounds of London" fashion—shows six bleared faces—one a half native half Chinese one, and the others Bengali. "There are no men here!" they cry.

"The house is empty." Then they grin and jabber and chew *pan* and spit, and hurry up the steps into the darkness. A range of three big rooms has been knocked into one here, and there is some sort of arrangement of mats. But an average country-bred is more sumptuously accommodated in an Englishman's stable. A home horse would snort at the accommodation.

"Nice sort of place, isn't it?" say the Police, genially. "This is where the sailors get robbed and drunk." "They must be blind drunk before they come." "Na—Na! Na sailor men ee—yah!" chorus the women, catching at the one word they understand. "Arl gone!" The Police take no notice, but tramp down the big room with the mat loose-boxes. A woman is shivering in one of these. "What's the matter?" "Fever. Seek. Vary, *vary* seek." She huddles herself into a heap on the *charpoy* and groans.

A tiny, pitch-black closet opens out of the long room, and into this the Police plunge. "Hullo! What's here?" Down flashes the lantern, and a white hand with black nails comes out of the gloom. Somebody is asleep or drunk in the cot. The ring of lantern light travels slowly up and down the body. "A sailor from the ships. He's got his *dungarees* on. He'll be robbed before the morning most likely." The man is sleeping

like a little child, both arms thrown over his head, and he is not unhandsome. He is shoeless, and there are huge holes in his stockings. He is a pure-blooded white, and carries the flush of innocent sleep on his cheeks.

The light is turned off, and the Police depart; while the woman in the loose-box shivers, and moans that she is "seek: vary, *vary* seek." It is not surprising.

CHAPTER VII

DEEPER AND DEEPER STILL

I built myself a lordly pleasure-house,
Wherein at ease for aye to dwell;
I said: "O Soul, make merry and carouse.
Dear Soul—for all is well."

—*The Palace of Art.*

"AND where next? I don't like Colootollah." The Police and their charge are standing in the interminable waste of houses under the starlight. "To the lowest sink of all," say the Police after the manner of Virgil when he took the Italian with the indigestion to look at the frozen sinners. "And where's that?" "Somewhere about here; but you wouldn't know if you were told." They lead and they lead and they lead, and they cease not from leading till they come to the last circle of the Inferno—a long, long, winding, quiet road. "There you are; you can see for yourself."

But there is nothing to be seen. On one side are houses—gaunt and dark, naked and devoid of furniture; on the other, low, mean stalls, lighted, and with shamelessly open doors, wherein

pains to prove that he is of the same flesh and blood.

All this time Mrs. D—— stands on the threshold of her room and looks upon the men with unabashed eyes. If the spirit of that English soldier, who married her long ago by the forms of the English Church, be now flitting bat-wise above the roofs, how singularly pleased and proud it must be! Mrs. D—— is a lady with a story. She is not averse to telling it. "What was—ahem—the case in which you were—er—hmn—concerned, Mrs. D——?" "They said I'd poisoned my husband by putting something into his drinking water." This is interesting. How much modesty *has* this creature? Let us see. "And—ah—*did* you?" "'Twasn't proved," says Mrs. D—— with a laugh, a pleasant, lady-like laugh that does infinite credit to her education and upbringing. Worthy Mrs. D——! It would pay a novelist—a French one let us say—to pick you out of the stews and make you talk.

The Police move forward, into a region of Mrs. D——'s. This is horrible; but they are used to it, and evidently consider indignation affectation. Everywhere are the empty houses, and the babbling women in print gowns. The clocks in the city are close upon midnight, but the Police show no signs of stopping. They plunge hither and

thither, like wreckers into the surf; and each plunge brings up a sample of misery, filth and woe.

"Sheikh Babu was murdered just here," they say, pulling up in one of the most troublesome houses in the ward. It would never do to appear ignorant of the murder of Sheikh Babu. "I only wonder that more aren't killed." The houses with their breakneck staircases, their hundred corners, low roofs, hidden courtyards and winding passages, seem specially built for crime of every kind. A woman—Eurasian—rises to a sitting position on a board-charpoy and blinks sleepily at the Police. Then she throws herself down with a grunt. "What's the matter with you?" "I live in Markiss Lane and"—this with intense gravity—"I'm *so* drunk." She has a rather striking gipsy-like face, but her language might be improved.

"Come along," say the Police, "we'll head back to Bentinck Street, and put you on the road to the Great Eastern." They walk long and steadily, and the talk falls on gambling hell. "You ought to see our men rush one of 'em. They like the work—natives of course. When we've marked a hell down, we post men at the entrances and carry it. Sometimes the Chinese bite, but as a rule they fight fair. It's a pity we hadn't a hell to show you. Let's go in here—

there may be something forward." "Here" appears to be in the heart of a Chinese quarter, for the pigtails—do they ever go to bed?—are scuttling about the streets. "Never go into a Chinese place alone," say the Police, and swung open a postern gate in a strong, green door. Two Chinamen appear.

"What are we going to see?" "Japanese gir— No, we aren't, by Jove! Catch that Chinaman, *quick*." The pigtail is trying to double back across a courtyard into an inner chamber; but a large hand on his shoulder spins him round and puts him in rear of the line of advancing Englishmen, who are, be it observed, making a fair amount of noise with their boots. A second door is thrown open, and the visitors advance into a large, square room blazing with gas. Here thirteen pigtails, deaf and blind to the outer world, are bending over a table. The captured Chinaman dodges uneasily in the rear of the procession. Five—ten—fifteen seconds pass, the Englishmen standing in the full light less than three paces from the absorbed gang who see nothing. Then burly Superintendent Lamb brings down his hand on his thigh with a crack like a pistol-shot and shouts: "How do, John?" Follows a frantic rush of scared Celestials, almost tumbling over each other in their anxiety to get clear. Gudgeon before the rush

of the pike are nothing to John Chinaman detected in the act of gambling. One pigtail scoops up a pile of copper money, another a chinaware soup-bowl and only a little mound of accusing cowries remains on the white matting that covers the table. In less than half a minute two facts are forcibly brought home to the visitor. First, that a pigtail is largely composed of silk, and rasps the palm of the hand as it slides through; and secondly, that the forearm of a Chinaman is surprisingly muscular and well-developed. "What's going to be done?" "Nothing. They're only three of us, and all the ringleaders would get away. Look at the doors. We've got 'em safe any time we want to catch 'em, if this little visit doesn't make 'em shift their quarters. Hi! John. No pidgin to-night. Show how you makee play. That fat youngster there is our informer."

Half the pigtails have fled into the darkness, but the remainder, assured and trebly assured that the Police really mean "no pidgin," return to the table and stand round while the croupier proceeds to manipulate the cowries, the little curved slip of bamboo and the soup-bowl. They never gamble, these innocents. They only come to look on, and smoke opium in the next room. Yet as the game progresses their eyes light up, and one by one they lose in to deposit their price

on odd or even—the number of the cowries that are covered and left uncovered by the little soup-bowl. *Mythan* is the name of the amusement, and, whatever may be its demerits, it is *clean*. The Police look on while their charge plays and oots a parchment-skinned horror—one of Swift's Struldburgs, strayed from Laputa—of the enormous sum of two annas. The return of this wealth, doubled, sets the loser beating his forehead against the table from sheer gratitude.

"*Most* immortal game this. A man might drop five whole rupees, if he began playing at sun-down and kept it up all night. Don't *you* ever play whist occasionally?"

"Now, we didn't bring you round to make fun of this department. A man can lose as much as ever he likes and he can fight as well, and if he loses all his money he steals to get more. A Chinaman is insane about gambling, and half his crime comes from it. It *must* be kept down." "And the other business. Any sort of supervision there?" "No; so long as they keep outside the penal code. Ask Dr. —— about that. It's outside our department. Here we are in Bentinck Street and you can be driven to the Great Eastern in a few minutes. Joss houses? Oh, yes. If you want more horrors, Superintendent Lamb will take you round with him tomorrow afternoon at five. Report yourself at

the Bow Bazar Thanna at five minutes to. Good-night."

The Police depart, and in a few minutes the silent, well-ordered respectability of Old Council House Street, with the grim Free Kirk at the end of it, is reached. All good Calcutta has gone to bed, the last tram has passed, and the peace of the night is upon the world. Would it be wise and rational to climb the spire of that kirk, and shout after the fashion of the great Lion-slayer of Tarescon: "O true believers! Decency is a fraud and a sham. There is nothing clean or pure or wholesome under the stars, and we are all going to perdition together. Amen!" On second thoughts it would not; for the spire is slippery, the night is hot, and the Police have been specially careful to warn their charge that he must not be carried away by the sight of horrors that cannot be written or hinted at.

"Good-morning," says the Policeman, tramping the pavement in front of the Great Eastern, and he nods his head pleasantly to show that he is the representative of Law and Peace and that the city of Calcutta is safe from itself for the present.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCERNING LUCIA

"Was a woman such a woman—cheeks so round and lips so red?
On the neck the small head buoyant like the bell flower in its bed."

TIME must be filled in somehow till five this afternoon, when Superintendent Lamb will reveal more horrors. Why not, the trams aiding, go to the Old Park Street Cemetery? It is presumption, of course, because none other than the great Sir W. W. Hunter once went there, and wove from his visit certain fascinating articles for the *Englishman;* the memory of which lingers even to this day, though they were written fully two years since.

But the Great Sir W. W. went in his Legislative Consular brougham and never in an unbridled tram-car which pulled up somewhere in the middle of Dhurrumtollah. "You want go Park Street? No trams going Park Street. You get out here." Calcutta tram conductors are not polite. Some day one of them will be hurt. The car shuffles unsympathetically down the street, and the evicted is stranded in Dhurrum-

tollah, which may be the Hammersmith Highway of Calcutta. Providence arranged this mistake, and paved the way to a Great Discovery now published for the first time. Dhurrumtollah is full of the People of India, walking in family parties and groups and confidential couples. And the people of India are neither Hindu nor Mussulman—Jew, Ethiop, Gueber nor expatriated British. They are the Eurasians, and there are hundreds and hundreds of them in Dhurrumtollah now. There is Papa with a shining black hat fit for a counsellor of the Queen, and Mamma, whose silken attire is tight upon her portly figure, and The Brood made up of straw-hatted, olive-cheeked, sharp-eyed little boys, and leggy maidens wearing white, open-work stockings calculated to show dust. There are the young men who smoke bad cigars and carry themselves lordily—such as have incomes. There are also the young women with the beautiful eyes and the wonderful dresses which always fit so badly across the shoulders. And they carry prayer-books or baskets, because they are either going to mass or the market. Without doubt, these are the people of India. They were born in it, bred in it, and will die in it. The Englishman only comes to the country, and the natives of course were there from the first, but these people have been made here, and no one has done anything

for them except talk and write about them. Yet they belong, some of them, to old and honorable families, hold "houses, messuages, and tenements" in Sealdah, and are rich, a few of them. They all look prosperous and contented, and they chatter eternally in that curious dialect that no one has yet reduced to print. Beyond what little they please to reveal now and again in the newspapers, we know nothing about their life which touches so intimately the white on the one hand and the black on the other. It must be interesting—more interesting than the colorless Anglo-Indian article; but who has treated of it? There was one novel once in which the second heroine was an Eurasienne. She was a strictly subordinate character, and came to a sad end. The poet of the race, Henry Derozio—he of whom Mr. Thomas Edwards wrote a history—was bitten with Keats and Scott and Shelley, and overlooked in his search for material things that lay nearest to him. All this mass of humanity in Dhurrumtollah is unexploited and almost unknown. Wanted, therefore, a writer from among the Eurasians, who shall write so that men shall be pleased to read a story of Eurasian life; then outsiders will be interested in the People of India, and will admit that the race has possibilities.

A futile attempt to get to Park Street from Dhurrumtollah ends in the market—the Hogg

Market men call it. Perhaps a knight of that name built it. It is not one-half as pretty as the Crawford Market, in Bombay but . . . it appears to be the trysting-place of Young Calcutta. The natural inclination of youth is to lie abed late, and to let the seniors do all the hard work. Why, therefore, should Pyramus who has to be ruling account forms at ten, and Thisbe, who *cannot* be interested in the price of second quality beef, wander, in studiously correct raiment, round and about the stalls before the sun is well clear of the earth? Pyramus carries a walking stick with imitation silver straps upon it, and there are cloth tops to his boots; but his collar has been two days worn. Thisbe crowns her dark head with a blue velvet Tam-o'-Shanter; but one of her boots lacks a button, and there is a tear in the left-hand glove. Mamma, who despises gloves, is rapidly filling a shallow basket, that the coolie-boy carries, with vegetables, potatoes, purple brinjals, and—Oh, Pryamus! Do you ever kiss Thisbe when Mamma is not near? —garlic—yea, *lusson* of the bazar. Mamma is generous in her views on garlic. Pryamus comes round the corner of the stall looking for nobody in particular—not he—and is elaborately polite to Mamma. Somehow, he and Thisbe drift off together, and Mamma, very portly and very voluble, is left to chaffer and sort and select alone.

In the name of the Sacred Unities do not, young people, retire to the meat-stalls to exchange confidences! Come up to this end, where the roses are arriving in great flat baskets, where the air is heavy with the fragrance of flowers, and the young buds and greenery are littering all the floor. They won't—they prefer talking by the dead, unromantic muttons, where there are not so many buyers. How they babble! There must have been a quarrel to make up. Thisbe shakes the blue velvet Tam-o'-Shanter and says: "O yess!" scornfully. Pyramus answers: "No-a, no-a. Do-ant say thatt." Mamma's basket is full and she picks up Thisbe hastily. Pyramus departs. *He* never came here to do any marketing. He came to meet Thisbe, who in ten years will own a figure very much like Mamma's. May their ways be smooth before them, and after honest service of the Government, may Pyramus retire on Rs. 250 per mensen, into a nice little house somewhere in Monghyr or Chunar.

From love by natural sequence to death. Where *is* the Park Street Cemetery? A hundred *gharriwans* leap from their boxes and invade the market, and after a short struggle one of them uncarts his capture in a burial-ground—a ghastly new place, close to a tramway. This is not what is wanted. The living dead are here—the people

whose names are not yet altogether perished and whose tombstones are tended. "Where are the *old* dead?" "Nobody goes there," says the *gharri-wan.* "It is up that road." He points up a long and utterly deserted thoroughfare, running between high walls. This is the place, and the entrance to it, with its *mallee* waiting with one brown, battered rose, its grilled door and its professional notices, bears a hideous likeness to the entrance of Simla churchyard. But, once inside, the sightseer stands in the heart of utter desolation—all the more forlorn for being swept up. Lower Park Street cuts a great graveyard in two. The guide-books will tell you when the place was opened and when it was closed. The eye is ready to swear that it is as old as Herculaneum and Pompeii. The tombs are small houses. It is as though we walked down the streets of a town, so tall are they and so closely do they stand—a town shriveled by fire, and scarred by frost and siege. They must have been afraid of their friends rising up before the due time that they weighted them with such cruel mounds of masonry. Strong man, weak woman, or somebody's "infant son aged fifteen months"—it is all the same. For each the squat obelisk, the defaced classic temple, the cellaret of chunam, or the candlestick of brickwork—the heavy slab, the rust-eaten railings, the whopper-jawed cherubs

and the apoplectic angels. Men were rich in those days and could afford to put a hundred cubic feet of masonry into the grave of even so humble a person as "Jno. Clements, Captain of the Country Service, 1820." When the "dearly beloved" had held rank answering to that of Commissioner, the efforts are still more sumptuous and the verse . . . Well, the following speaks for itself:

> "Soft on thy tomb shall fond Remembrance shed
> The warm yet unavailing tear,
> And purple flowers that deck the honored dead
> Shall strew the loved and honored bier."

Failure to comply with the contract does not, let us hope, entail to forfeiture of the earnest-money; or the honored dead might be grieved. The slab is out of his tomb, and leans foolishly against it; the railings are rotted, and there are no more lasting ornaments than blisters and stains, which are the work of the weather, and not the result of the "warm yet unavailing tear." The eyes that promised to shed them have been closed any time these seventy years.

Let us go about and moralize cheaply on the tombstones, trailing the robe of pious reflection up and down the pathways of the grave. Here is a big and stately tomb sacred to "Lucia," who died in 1776 A. D., aged 23. Here also be verses

which an irreverent thumb can bring to light. Thus they wrote, when their hearts were heavy in them, one hundred and sixteen years ago :

"What needs the emblem, what the plaintive strain,
What all the arts that sculpture e'er expressed,
To tell the treasure that these walls contain?
Let those declare it most who knew her best.

"The tender pity she would oft display
Shall be with interest at her shrine returned,
Connubial love, connubial tears repay,
And Lucia loved shall still be Lucia mourned.

"Though closed the lips, though stopped the tuneful breath,
The silent, clay-cold monitress shall teach—
In all the alarming eloquence of death
With double pathos to the heart shall preach.

"Shall teach the virtuous maid, the faithful wife,
If young and fair, that young and fair was she,
Then close the useful lesson of her life,
And tell them what she is, they soon must be."

That goes well, even after all these years, does it not? and seems to bring Lucia very near, in spite of what the later generation is pleased to call the stiltedness of the old-time verse.

Who will declare the merits of Lucia—dead in her spring before there was even a *Hickey's Gazette* to chronicle the amusements of Calcutta, and publish, with scurrilous asterisks, the *liaisons* of heads of departments? What pot-bellied East

Indiaman brought the "virtuous maid" up the river, and did Lucia "make her bargain," as the cant of those times went, on the first, second, or third day after her arrival? Or did she, with the others of the batch, give a spinsters' ball as a last trial—following the custom of the country? No. She was a fair Kentish maiden, sent out, at a cost of five hundred pounds, English money, under the captain's charge, to wed the man of her choice, and *he* knew Clive well, had had dealings with Omichand, and talked to men who had lived through the terrible night in the Black Hole. He was a rich man, Lucia's battered tomb proves it, and he gave Lucia all that her heart could wish. A green-painted boat to take the air in on the river of evenings. Coffree slave-boys who could play on the French horn, and even a very elegant, neat coach with a genteel rutlan roof ornamented with flowers very highly finished, ten best polished plate glasses, ornamented with a few elegant medallions enriched with mother-o'-pearl, that she might take her drive on the course as befitted a factor's wife. All these things he gave her. And when the convoys came up the river, and the guns thundered, and the servants of the Honorable the East India Company drank to the king's health, be sure that Lucia before all the other ladies in the fort had her choice of the new stuffs from Eng-

land and was cordially hated in consequence. Tilly Kettle painted her picture a little before she died, and the hot-blooded young writers did duel with small swords in the fort ditch for the honor of piloting her through a minuet at the Calcutta theatre or the Punch House. But Warren Hastings danced with her instead, and the writers were confounded—every man of them. She was a toast far up the river. And she walked in the evening on the bastions of Fort-William, and said: "La! I protest!" It was there that she exchanged congratulations with all her friends on the 20th of October, when those who were alive gathered together to felicitate themselves on having come through another hot season; and the men—even the sober factor saw no wrong here—got most royally and Britishly drunk on Madeira that had twice rounded the Cape. But Lucia fell sick, and the doctor—he who went home after seven years with five lakhs and a half, and a corner of this vast graveyard to his account—said that it was a pukka or putrid fever, and the system required strengthening. So they fed Lucia on hot curries, and mulled wine worked up with spirits and fortified with spices, for nearly a week; at the end of which time she closed her eyes on the weary, weary river and the fort forever, and a gallant, with a turn for *belles lettres*, wept openly as men did then and had no shame

of it, and composed the verses above set, and thought himself a neat hand at the pen—stap his vitals! But the factor was so grieved that he could write nothing at all—could only spend his money—and he counted his wealth by lakhs—on a sumptuous grave. A little later on he took comfort, and when the next batch came out—

But this has nothing whatever to do with the story of Lucia, the virtuous maid, the faithful wife. Her ghost went to Mrs. Westland's powder ball, and looked very beautiful.

CHAPTER IX

A RAILWAY SETTLEMENT

JAMALPUR is the headquarters of the E. I. Railway. This in itself is not a startling statement. The wonder begins with the exploration of Jamalpur, which is a station entirely made by, and devoted to, the use of those untiring servants of the public, the railway folk. They have towns of their own at Toondla and Assensole, a sun-dried sanitarium at Bandikui; and Howrah, Ajmir, Allahabad, Lahore and Pindi know their colonies. But Jamalpur is unadulteratedly "Railway," and he who has nothing to do with the E. I. Railway in some shape or another feels a stranger and an "interloper." Running always east and southerly, the train carries him from the torments of the northwest into the wet, woolly warmth of Bengal, where may be found the hothouse heat that has ruined the temper of the good people of Calcutta. Here the land is fat and greasy with good living, and the wealth of the bodies of innumerable dead things; and here—just above Mokameh—may be seen fields stretching, without stick, stone or bush to break the view, from the railway line to the horizon.

Up-country innocents must look at the map to

learn that Jamalpur is near the top left-hand corner of the big loop that the E. I. R. throws out round Bhagalpur and part of the Bara-Banki districts. Northward of Jamalpur, as near as may be, lies the Ganges and Tirhoot, and eastward an offshoot of the volcanic Rajmehal range blocks the view.

A station which has neither Judge, Commissioner, Deputy or 'Stunt, which is devoid of law courts, ticca-gharries, District Superintendents of Police, and many other evidences of an overcultured civilization, is a curiosity. "We administer ourselves," says Jamalpur, proudly, "or we did—till we had lokil sluff brought in—and now the racket-marker administers us." This is a solemn fact. The station, which had its beginnings thirty odd years ago, used, till comparatively recent times, to control its own roads, sewage, conservancy, and the like. But, with the introduction of local self-government, it was ordained that the "inestimable boon" should be extended to a place made by, and maintained for, Europeans, and a brand new municipality was created and nominated according to the many rules of the game. In the skirmish that ensued, the club racket-marker fought his way to the front, secured a place on a board largely composed of Babus, and since that day Jamalpur's views on "local sluff" have not been fit for pub-

lication. To understand the magnitude of the insult, one must study the city—for station, in the strict sense of the word, it is not. Crotons, palms, mangoes, *mellingtonias*, teak, and bamboos adorn it, and the *ponisettia* and *bougainvillea*, the railway creeper and the *bignonia-venusta* make it gay with many colors. It is laid out with military precision on the right-hand side of the line going down to Calcutta—to each house its just share of garden and green *jilmil*, its red *surki* path, its growth of trees, and its neat little wicket gate. Its general aspect, in spite of the Dutch formality, is that of an English village, such a thing as enterprising stage-managers put on the theatres at home. The hills have thrown a protecting arm round nearly three sides of it, and on the fourth it is bounded by what are locally known as the "shed;" in other words, the station, offices, and workshops of the company. The E. I. R. only exists for outsiders. Its servants speak of it reverently, angrily, despitefully, or enthusiastically as "The Company;" and they never omit the big, big C. Men must have treated the Honorable East India Company in something the same fashion ages ago. "The Company" in Jamalpur is Lord Dufferin, all the Members of Council, the Body-Guard, Sir Frederick Roberts, Mr. Westland, whose name is at the bottom of the currency notes, the

Oriental Life Assurance Company, and the Bengal Government all rolled into one. At first, when a stranger enters this life, he is inclined to scoff and ask, in his ignorance: "*What* is this Company that you talk so much about?" Later on, he ceases to scoff, and his mouth opens slowly; for the Company is a "big" thing—almost big enough to satisfy an American.

Ere beginning to describe its doings, let it be written, and repeated several times hereafter, that the E. I. R. passenger carriages, and especially the second-class, are just now—horrid, being filthy and unwashen, dirty to look at, and dirty to live in. Having cast this small stone, we will examine Jamalpur. When it was laid out, in or before the Mutiny year, its designers allowed room for growth, and made the houses of one general design—some of brick, some of stone, some three, four, and six-roomed, some single men's barracks and some two-storied—all for the use of the *employees*. King's Road, Prince's Road, Queen's Road, and Victoria Road—Jamalpur is loyal—cut the breadth of the station; and Albert Road, Church Street, and Steam Road the length of it. Neither on these roads or on any of the cool-shaded smaller ones is anything unclean or unsightly to be found. There is a dreary *bustee* in the neighborhood which is said to make the most of any cholera that may be going, but

Jamalpur itself is specklessly and spotlessly neat. From St. Mary's Church to the railway station, and from the buildings where they print daily about half a lakh of tickets to the ringing, roaring, rattling workshops, everything has the air of having been cleaned up at ten that very morning and put under a glass case. Also there is a holy calm about the roads—totally unlike anything in an English manufacturing town. Wheeled conveyances are few, because every man's bungalow is close to his work, and when the day has begun and the offices of the "Loco." and "Traffic" have soaked up their thousands of natives and hundreds of Europeans, you shall pass under the dappled shadows of the teak trees, hearing nothing louder than the croon of some bearer playing with a child in the veranda or the faint tinkle of a piano. This is pleasant, and produces an impression of Watteau-like refinement tempered with Arcadian simplicity. The dry, anguished howl of the "buzzer," the big steam-whistle, breaks the hush, and all Jamalpur is alive with the tramping of tiffin-seeking feet. The Company gives one hour for meals between eleven and twelve. On the stroke of noon there is another rush back to the works or the offices, and Jamalpur sleeps through the afternoon till four or half-past, and then rouses for tennis at the institute.

It is a quiet, restful place to live or die in, but not great for enterprise. Tropical or semi-tropical cities are never remarkable for excessive energy or activity. Nor do the inhabitants arrive at fortune made by the exertion of the persons possessing it. Fortunes are made in such places, but by the dull continuous labor of inferiors and natives for some supervisor or director usually foreign.

In the hot weather it splashes in the swimming bath, or reads, for it has a library of several thousand books. One of the most flourishing lodges in the Bengal jurisdiction—"St. George in the East"—lives at Jamalpur, and meets twice a month. Its members point out with justifiable pride that all the fittings were made by their own hands; and the lodge in its accoutrements and the energy of the craftsmen can compare with any in India. But the institute seems to be the central gathering place, and its half-dozen tennis-courts and neatly-laid-out grounds seem to be always full. Here, if a stranger could judge, the greater part of the flirtation of Jamalpur is carried out, and here the dashing apprentice—the apprentices are the liveliest of all—learns that there are problems harder than any he studies at the night school, and that the heart of a maiden is more inscrutable than the mechanism of a locomotive. On Tuesdays and Fridays, as a printed

notification witnesseth, the volunteers parade. A and B Companies, one hundred and fifty strong in all, of the E. I. R. Volunteers, are stationed here with the band. Their uniform, grey with red facings, is not lovely, but they know how to shoot and drill. They have to. The "Company" makes it a condition of service that a man must be a volunteer; and volunteer in something more than name he must be, or some one will ask the reason why. Seeing that there are no regulars between Howrah and Dinapore, the "Company" does well in exacting this toll. Some of the old soldiers are wearied of drill, some of the youngsters don't like it, but—the way they entrain and detrain is worth seeing. They are as mobile a corps as can be desired, and perhaps ten or twelve years hence the Government may possibly be led to take a real interest in them and spend a few thousand rupees in providing them with real soldiers' kits—not uniform and rifle merely. Their ranks include all sorts and conditions of men—heads of the "loco." and "traffic," the "Company" is no great respecter of rank—clerks in the "audit," boys from mercantile firms at home, fighting with the intricacies of time, fare and freight tables; guards who have grown grey in the service of the Company; mail and passenger drivers with nerves of cast iron, who can shoot through a long afternoon without los-

ing temper or flurrying; light-built East Indians; Tyne-side men, slow of speech and uncommonly strong in the arm; lathy apprentices who have not yet "filled out;" fitters, turners, foremen, full assistant and sub-assistant station-masters, and a host of others. In the hands of the younger men the regulation Martini-Henri naturally goes off the line occasionally on a *shikar* expedition.

There is a twelve-hundred yards' range running down one side of the station, and the condition of the grass by the firing butts tells its own tale. Scattered in the ranks of the volunteers are a fair number of old soldiers, for the Company has a weakness for recruiting from the army for its guards who may, in time, become station-masters. A good man from the army, with his papers all correct and certificates from his commanding officer, may, after depositing twenty pounds to pay his home passage, in the event of his services being dispensed with, enter the Company's service on something less than one hundred rupees a month and rise in time to four hundred as a station-master. A railway bungalow—and they are as substantially built as the engines—cannot cost him more than one-ninth of the pay of his grade, and the Provident Fund provides for his latter end.

Think for a moment of the number of men that

a line running from Howrah to Delhi must use, and you will realize what an enormous amount of patronage the Company holds in its hands. Naturally a father who has worked for the line expects the line to do something for the son; and the line is not backward in meeting his wishes where possible. The sons of old servants may be taken on at fifteen years of age, or thereabouts, as apprentices in the "shops," receiving twenty rupees in the first and fifty in the last year of the indentures. Then they come on the books as full "men" on perhaps Rs. 65 a month, and the road is open to them in many ways. They may become foremen of departments on Rs. 500 a month, or drivers earning with overtime Rs. 370; or if they have been brought into the audit or the traffic, they may control innumerable Babus and draw several hundreds of rupees monthly; or, at eighteen or nineteen, they may be ticket-collectors, working up to the grade of guard, etc. Every rank of the huge, human hive has a desire to see its sons placed properly, and the native workmen, about three thousand, in the locomotive department only, are, said one man, "making a family affair of it altogether. You see all those men turning brass and looking after the machinery? They've all got relatives, and a lot of 'em own land out Monghyr-way close to us. They bring on their sons as soon as they are old

enough to do anything, and the Company rather encourages it. You see the father is in a way responsible for his son, and he'll teach him all he knows, and in that way the Company has a hold on them all. You've no notion how sharp a native is when he's working on his own hook. All the district round here, right up to Monghyr, is more or less dependent on the railway."

The Babus in the traffic department, in the stores, issue department, in all the departments where men sit through the long, long Indian day among ledgers, and check and pencil and deal in figures and items and rupees, may be counted by hundreds. Imagine the struggle among them to locate their sons in comfortable cane-bottomed chairs, in front of a big pewter inkstand and stacks of paper! The Babus make beautiful accountants, and if we could only see it, a merciful Providence has made the Babu for figures and detail. Without him on the Bengal side, the dividends of any company would be eaten up by the expenses of English or country-bred clerks. The Babu is a great man, and, to respect him, you must see five score or so of him in a room a hundred yards long bending over ledgers, ledgers, and yet more ledgers—silent as the Sphinx and busy as a bee. He is the lubricant of the great machinery of the Company whose ways and works cannot be dealt with in a single scrawl.

CHAPTER X

THE MIGHTY SHOPS

A STUDY of this Republic of Jamalpur is not easy. The railway folk, like the army and civilian castes, have their own language and life, which an outsider cannot hope to understand. For instance, when Jamalpur refers to itself as being "on the long siding," a lengthy explanation is necessary before the visitor grasps the fact that the whole of the two hundred and thirty odd miles of the loop from Luckeeserai to Kanu-Junction *via* Bhagalpur is thus contemptuously treated. Jamalpur insists that it is out of the world, and makes this an excuse for being proud of itself and all its institutions. But in one thing it is badly, disgracefully provided. At a moderate estimate there must be about two hundred Europeans with their families in this place. They can, and do, get their small supplies from Calcutta, but they are dependent on the tender mercies of the bazar for their meat, which seems to be hawked from door to door. Also, there is a Raja who owns or has an interest in the land on which the station stands, and he is averse to cow-killing. For these reasons, Jamalpur is not

too well supplied with good meat, and what it wants is a decent meat-market with cleanly controlled slaughtering arrangements. The "Company," who gives grants to the schools and builds the institute and throws the shadow of its protection all over the place, might help this scheme forward.

The heart of Jamalpur is the "shops," and here a visitor will see more things in an hour than he can understand in a year. Steam Street very appropriately leads to the forty or fifty acres that the "shops" cover, and to the busy silence of the loco. superintendent's office, where a man must put down his name and his business on a slip of paper before he can penetrate into the Temple of Vulcan. About three thousand five hundred men are in the "shops," and, ten minutes after the day's work has begun, the assistant superintendent knows exactly how many are "in." The heads of departments—silent, heavy-handed men, captains of five hundred or more—have their names fairly printed on a board which is exactly like a pool-marker. They "star a life" when they come in, and their few names alone represent salaries to the extent of six thousand a month. They are men worth hearing deferentially. They hail from Manchester and the Clyde, and the great ironworks of the North, and pleasant as cold water in a thirsty land is it to hear again the full

Northumbrian burr or the long-drawn Yorkshire "aye." Under their great gravity of demeanor—a man who is in charge of a few lakhs' worth of plant cannot afford to be riotously mirthful—lurks melody and humor. They can sing like north-countrymen, and in their hours of ease go back to the speech of the iron countries they have left behind, when "Ab o' th' yate" and all "Ben Briarly's" shrewd wit shakes the warm air of Bengal with deep-chested laughter. Hear "Ruglan' Toon," with a chorus as true as the fall of trip-hammers, and fancy that you are back again in the smoky, rattling, ringing North.

But this is the "unofficial" side. Let us go forward through the gates under the mango trees, and set foot at once in sheds which have as little to do with mangoes as a locomotive with Lakshmi. The "buzzer" howls, for it is nearly tiffin time. There is a rush from every quarter of the shops, a cloud of flying natives, and a procession of more sedately pacing Englishmen, and in three short minutes you are left absolutely alone among arrested wheels and belts, pulleys, cranks, and cranes—in a silence only broken by the soft sigh of a far-away steam-valve or the cooing of pigeons. You are, by favor freely granted, at liberty to wander anywhere you please through the deserted works. Walk into a huge, brick-built, tin-roofed stable, capable of holding twenty-four

locomotives under treatment, and see what must be done to the Iron Horse once in every three years if he is to do his work well. On reflection, Iron Horse is wrong. An engine is a she—as distinctly feminine as a ship or a mine. Here stands the *Echo*, her wheels off, resting on blocks, her underside machinery taken out, and her side scrawled with mysterious hieroglyphics in chalk. An enormous green-painted iron marness-rack bears her piston and eccentric rods, and a neatly-painted board shows that such and such Englishmen are the fitter, assistant and apprentice engaged in editing the *Echo*. An engine seen from the platform and an engine viewed from underneath are two very different things. The one is as unimpressive as a *ticca-gharri;* the other as imposing as a man-of-war in the yard.

In this manner is an engine treated for navicular, laminitis, backsinew, or whatever it is that engines most suffer from. No. 607, we will say, goes wrong at Dinapore, Assensole, Buxar, or whatever it may be, after three years' work. The place she came from is stencilled on the boiler, and the foreman examines her. Then he fills in a hospital sheet, which bears one hundred and eighty printed heads under which an engine can come into the shops. No. 607 needs repair in only one hundred and eighteen particulars, ranging from mud-hole flanges and blower-cocks to lead-

plugs, and platform brackets which have shaken loose. This certificate the foreman signs, and it is framed near the engine for the benefit of the three Europeans and the eight or nine natives who have to mend No. 607. To the ignorant the superhuman wisdom of the examiner seems only equalled by the audacity of the two men and the boy who are to undertake what is frivolously called the "job." No. 607 is in a sorely mangled condition, but 403 is much worse. She is reduced to a shell—is a very lean woman of an engine, bearing only her funnel, the iron frame and the saddle that supports the boiler. All the pretty little instruction primers say that an engine takes to pieces like a watch, but it is not good to see an engine so treated. Better had a man believe that "they light the fire under the water, y'know, and that makes the water steam, and that gets into those piston things, and that drives the train."

Four-and-twenty engines in every stage of decomposition stand in one huge shop. A traveling crane runs overhead, and the men have hauled up one end of a bright vermilion loco. The effect is the silence of a scornful stare—just such a look as a colonel's portly wife gives through her *pince-nez* at the audacious subaltern. Engines are the "liveliest" things that man ever made. They glare through their spectacle-plates, they tilt their noses contemptuously, and when

their insides are gone they adorn themselves with red lead and leer like decayed beauties; and in the Jamalpur works there is no escape from them. The shops can hold fifty without pressure, and on occasion as many again. Everywhere there are engines, and everywhere brass domes lie about on the ground like huge helmets in a pantomime. The silence is the weirdest touch of all. Some sprightly soul—an apprentice be sure—has daubed in red lead on the end of an iron tool box a caricature of some friend who is evidently a riveter. The picture has all the interest of an Egyptian cartouche, for it shows that men have been here, and that the engines do not have it all their own way.

And so, out in the open, away from the three great sheds between and under more engines, till we strike a wilderness of lines all converging to one turn-table. Here be elephant stalls ranged round a half-circle, and in each stall stands one engine, and each engine stares at the turn-table. A stolid and disconcerting company is this ring of eyed monsters; 324, 432, and 8 are shining like Bon Marche toys. They are ready for their turn of duty, and are as spruce as hansoms. Lacquered chocolate, picked out with black, red and white, is their dress, and delicate lemon graces the ceilings of the cabs. The driver should be a gentleman in evening dress with white kid

gloves, and there should be gold-headed champagne bottles in the spick and span tenders. Huckleberry Finn says of a timber raft: "It amounted to something being captain of that raft." Thrice enviable is the man who, drawing Rs. 220 a month, is allowed to make Rs. 150 overtime out of locos. Nos. 324, 432 or 8. Fifty yards beyond this gorgeous trinity are ten to twelve engines who have put in to Jamalpur to bait. They are alive, their fires are lighted, and they are swearing and purring and growling one at another as they stand alone—all alone. Here is evidently one of the newest type—No. 25, a giant who has just brought the mail in and waits to be cleaned up preparatory to going out afresh.

The tiffin hour has ended. The buzzer blows, and with a roar, a rattle and a clang the shops take up their toil. The hubbub that followed on the prince's kiss to the sleeping beauty was not so loud or sudden. Experience, with a foot-rule in his pocket, authority in his port, and a merry twinkle in his eye, comes up and catches Ignorance walking gingerly round No. 25. "That's one of the best we have," says Experience, "a four-wheeled coupled bogie they call her. She's by Dobbs. She's done her hundred and fifty miles to-day; and she'll run in to Rampore Haut this afternoon; then she'll rest a day and be cleaned up. Roughly, she does her three hun-

dred miles in the four-and-twenty hours. She's a beauty. She's out from home, but we can build our own engines—all except the wheels. We're building ten locos. now, and we've got a dozen boilers ready if you care to look at them. How long does a loco. last? That's just as may be. She will do as much as her driver lets her. Some men play the mischief with a loco. and some handle 'em properly. Our drivers prefer Hawthorne's old four-wheel coupled engines because they give the least bother. There is one in that shed, and it's a good 'un to travel. But 80,000 miles generally sees the gloss off an engine, and she goes into the shops to be overhauled and re-fitted and re-planed, and a lot of things that you wouldn't understand if I told you about them. No. 1, the first loco. on the line, is running still, but very little of the original engine must be left by this time. That one there, called the *Fawn*, came out in the Mutiny year. She's by Slaughter and Grunning, and she's built for speed in front of a light load. French-looking sort of thing, isn't she? That's because her cylinders are on a tilt. We used her for the mail once, but the mail has grown heavier and heavier, and now we use six-wheel coupled eighteen inch, inside cylinder, 45-ton locos. to shift thousand-ton trains. *No!* All locos. aren't alike. It isn't merely pulling a lever. The company likes

its drivers to know their locos., and a man will keep his Hawthorne for two or three years. The more mileage he gets out of her before she has to be overhauled the better man he is. It pays to let a man have his fancy engine. The Company knows that. Other lines don't. There's the ——. They run the life out of the men and the locos. together. They'll run an engine into the cleaning shed wherever it may be, and then another driver jumps on and runs her back again, and so on till they've run the inside out of her. The drivers don't care. 'Tisn't *their* engine? The other man always said to have damaged her, and so the —— get their stock into a sweet state. 'Come in with a slide bar about red hot, and everything else to match. A man must take an interest in his loco., and that means she must belong to him. Some locos. won't do anything, even if you coax and humor them. I don't *think* there are any unlucky ones now, but some years ago No. 31 wasn't popular. The drivers went sick or took leave when they were told off for her. She killed her driver on the Jubbulpore line, she left the rails at Kajra, she did something or other at Rampur Haunt, and Lord knows what she didn't do or try to do in other places! All the drivers fought shy of her, and in the end she disappeared. They said she was condemned, but I shouldn't wonder if the Company changed

her number quietly, and changed the luck at the same time. You see, the Government Inspector comes and looks at our stock now and again, and when an engine's condemned he puts his dhobi mark on her, and she's broken up. Well, No. 31 was condemned, but there was a whisper that they only shifted her number, and ran her out again. When the drivers didn't know there were no accidents. I don't think we've got an unlucky one running now. Some are different from others, but there are no man-eaters. Yes, a driver of the mail *is* somebody. He can make Rs. 370 a month if he's a covenanted man. We get a lot of our drivers in the country, and we don't import from England as much as we did. Stands to reason that, now there's more competition both among lines and in the labor market, the Company can't afford to be as generous as it used to be. It doesn't trap a man though. It's this way with the drivers. A native driver gets about Rs. 20 a month, and in his way he's supposed to be good enough for branch work and shunting and such. Well, an English driver'll get from Rs. 80 to Rs. 220, and overtime. The English driver knows what the native gets, and in time they tell the driver that the native'll improve. The driver has that to think of. You see? That's competition! A driver, one day with another, does his hundred miles a day. Say

a man leaves Buxar at 2 p. m. he gets to Allahabad at 7 p. m. That's 163 miles. He rests at Allahabad till 8:20 next morning, when he goes back to Buxar, and rests till about 2 p. m. the next day. Then goes to Mokameh, reaches Mokameh at 7 p. m., stays till 4 next morning, and gets back to Buxar at 9:20 a. m. Then it all begins over again. He has got about three thousand pounds' worth of the Company's property to look after under his own hand, and the Lord knows how much value in the train behind him. Oh, he's got quite enough to think of when he's on his engine."

Experience returns to the engine-sheds, now full of clamor, and enlarges on the beauties of sick locomotives. The fitters and the assistants and the apprentices are hammering and punching and gauging, and otherwise technically disporting themselves round their enormous patients, and their language, as caught in snatches, is beautifully unintelligible.

But one flying sentence goes straight to the heart. It is the cry of humanity over the task of life, done into unrefined English. An apprentice, grimed to his eyebrows, his cloth cap well on the back of his curly head and his hands deep in his pockets, is sitting on the edge of a tool-box ruefully regarding the very much disorganized engine whose slave is he. A hand-

some boy, this apprentice, and well made. He whistles softly between his teeth and his brow puckers. Then he addresses the engine, saying, half in expostulation and half in despair: "Oh, you condemned old female dog!" He puts the sentence more crisply—much more crisply—and Ignorance chuckles sympathetically.

Ignorance also is puzzled over these engines.

CHAPTER XI

AT VULCAN'S FORGE

In the wilderness of the railway shops—and machinery that planes and shaves, and bevels and stamps, and punches and hoists and nips—the first idea that occurs to an outsider, when he has seen the men who people the place, is that it must be the birthplace of inventions—a pasture-ground of fat patents. If a writing-man, who plays with shadows and dresses dolls that others may laugh at their antics, draws help and comfort and new methods of working old ideas from the stored shelves of a library, how, in the name of Commonsense, his god, can a doing-man, whose mind is set upon things that snatch a few moments from flying Time or put power into weak hands, refrain from going forward and adding new inventions to the hundreds among which he daily moves?

Appealed to on this subject, Experience, who had served the E. I. R. loyally for many years, held his peace. "We don't go in much for patents; but," he added, with a praiseworthy attempt to turn the conversation, "we can build you any mortal thing you like. We've got the

Bradford Leslie for the Sahibgunge ferry. Come and see the brass-work for her bows. It's in the casting-shed."

It would have been cruel to have pressed Experience further, and Ignorance, to foredate matters a little, went about to discover why Experience shied off this question, and why the men of Jamalpur had not each and all invented and patented something. He won his information in the end, but did not come from Jamalpur. *That* must be clearly understood. It was found anywhere you please between Howrah and Hoti Mardan; and here it is that all the world may admire a prudent and far-sighted Board of Directors. Once upon a time, as every one in the profession knows, two men invented the D. and O. sleeper—cast iron, of five pieces, very serviceable. The men were in the Company's employ, and their masters said: "Your brains are ours. Hand us over those sleepers." Being of pay and position, D. and O. made some sort of resistance and got a royalty or a bonus. At any rate, the Company had to pay for its sleepers. But thereafter, and the condition exists to this day, they caused it to be written in each servant's covenant, that if by chance he invented aught, his invention was to belong to the Company. Providence has mercifully arranged that no man or syndicate of men can buy the "holy spirit of

man" outright without suffering in some way or another just as much as the purchase. America fully, and Germany in part, recognizes this law. The E. I. Railway's breach of it is thoroughly English. They say, or it is said of them, that they say: "We are afraid of our men, who belong to us waking and sleeping, wasting their time on trying to invent."

It is wholly impossible, then, for men of mechanical experience and large sympathies to check the mere patent-hunter and bring forward the man with an idea? Is there no supervision in the "shops," or have the men who play tennis and billiards at the institute not a minute which they can rightly call their very own? Would it ruin the richest Company in India to lend their model shop and their lathes to half-a-dozen, or, for the matter of that, half-a-hundred, abortive experiments? A Massachusetts organ factory, a Racine buggy shop, an Oregon lumber yard would laugh at the notion. An American toy-maker might swindle an *employee* after the invention, but he would in his own interests help the man to "see what comes of the thing." Surely a wealthy, a powerful and, as all Jamalpur bears witness, a considerate Company might cut that clause out of the covenant and await the issue. There would be quite enough jealousy between man and man, grade and grade, to keep

down all the keenest souls; and with due respect to the steam-hammer and the rolling-mill, we have not yet made machinery perfect. The "shops" are not likely to spawn unmanageable Stephensons or grasping Brunels; but in the minor turns of mechanical thought that find concrete expressions in links, axle-boxes, joint-packings, valves and spring-stirrups something might—something would—be done were the practical prohibition removed. Will a North countryman give you anything but warm hospitality for nothing? Or if you claim from him overtime service as a right, will he fall to work zealously? "Onything but t' brass," is his motto, and his ideas are his "brass."

Gentlemen in authority, if this should meet your august eyes, spare it a minute's thought, and, clearing away the floridity, get to the heart of the mistake and see if it cannot be rationally put right. Above all, remember that Jamalpur supplied no information. It was as mute as an oyster. There is no one within your jurisdiction to—ahem—"drop upon."

Let us, after this excursion into the offices, return to the shops and only ask Experience such questions as he can without disloyalty answer.

"We used once," says he, leading to the foundry, "to sell our old rails and import new ones. Even when we used 'em for roof beams

and so on, we had more than we knew what to do with. Now we have got rolling-mills, and we use the rails to make tie-bars for the D. and O. sleepers and all sorts of things. We turn out five hundred D. and O. sleepers a day. Altogether, we use about seventy-five tons of our own iron a month here. Iron in Calcutta costs about five-eight a hundredweight; ours cost between three-four and three-eight, and on that item alone we save three thousand a month. Don't ask me how many miles of rails we own. There are fifteen hundred miles of line, and you can make your own calculation. All those things like babies' graves, down in that shed, are the moulds of the D. and O. sleepers. We test them by dropping three hundredweight and three hundred quarters of iron on top of them from a height of seven feet, or eleven sometimes. They don't often smash. We have a notion here that our iron is as good as the home stuff."

A sleek, white and brindled pariah thrusts himself into the conversation. His home appears to be on the warm ashes of the bolt-maker. This is a horrible machine, which chews red-hot iron bars and spits them out perfect bolts. Its manners are disgusting, and it gobbles over its food.

"Hi, Jack!" says Experience, stroking the interloper, "you've been trying to break your leg again. That's the dog of the works. At least

he makes believe that the works belong to him. He'll follow any one of us about the shops as far as the gate, but never a step further. You can see he's first-class condition. The boys give him his ticket, and, one of these days, he'll try to get on to the Company's books as a regular worker. He's too clever to live." Jack heads the procession as far as the walls of the rolling-shed and then returns to his machinery room. He waddles with fatness and despises strangers.

"How would you like to be hot-potted there?" says Experience, who has read and who is enthusiastic over *She*, as he points to the great furnaces whence the slag is being dragged out by hooks. "Here is the old material going into the furnace in that big iron bucket. Look at the scraps of iron. There's an old D. and O. sleeper, there's a lot of clips from a cylinder, there's a lot of snipped-up rails, there's a driving-wheel block, there's an old hook, and a sprinkling of boiler-plates and rivets."

The bucket is tipped into the furnace with a thunderous roar and the slag below pours forth more quickly. "An engine," says Experience, reflectively, "can run over herself so to say. After she's broken up she is made into sleepers for the line. You'll see how she's broken up later." A few paces further on, semi-nude demons are capering over strips of glowing hot iron which

are put into a mill as rails and emerge as thin, shapely tie-bars. The natives wear rough sandals and some pretence of aprons, but the greater part of them is "all face." "As I said before," says Experience, "a native's cuteness when he's working on ticket is something startling. Beyond occasionally hanging on to a red-hot bar too long and so letting their pincers be drawn through the mills, these men take precious good care not to go wrong. Our machinery is fenced and guard-railed as much as possible, and these men don't get caught up by the belting. In the first place, they're careful—the father warns the son and so on—and in the second, there's nothing about 'em for the belting to catch on unless the man shoves his hand in. Oh, a native's no fool! He knows that it doesn't do to be foolish when he's dealing with a crane or a driving-wheel. You're looking at all those chopped rails? We make our iron as they blend baccy. We mix up all sorts to get the required quality. Those rails have just been chopped by this tobacco-cutter thing." Experience bends down and sets a vicious-looking, parrot-headed beam to work. There is a quiver—a snap—and a dull smash and a heavy 76-pound rail is nipped in two like a stick of barley-sugar.

Elsewhere, a bull-nosed hydraulic cutter is rail cutting as if it enjoyed the fun. In another shed

stand the steam-hammers; the unemployed ones murmuring and muttering to themselves, as is the uncanny custom of all steam-souled machinery. Experience, with his hand on a long lever, makes one of the monsters perform: and though Ignorance knows that a man designed and men do continually build steam hammers, the effect is as though Experience were maddening a chained beast. The massive block slides down the guides, only to pause hungrily an inch above the anvil, or restlessly throb through a foot and a half of space, each motion being controlled by an almost imperceptible handling of the levers. "When these things are newly overhauled, you can regulate your blow to within an eighth of an inch," says Experience. "We had a foreman here once who could work 'em beautifully. He had the touch. One day a visitor, no end of a swell in a tall, white hat, came round the works, and our foreman borrowed the hat and brought the hammer down just enough to press the knap and no more. 'How wonderful!' said the visitor, putting his hand carelessly upon this lever rod here." Experience suits the action to the word and the hammer thunders on the anvil. "Well you can guess for yourself. Next minute there wasn't enough left of that tall, white hat to make a postage-stamp of. Steam-hammers aren't things to play with. Now we'll go over

to the stores and see what happens to the old stock."

Experience leads the way to the Golgotha of Jamalpur. A great tripod, whence depends a pulley, chain, and hook, hangs over a circular fence, strong as an elephant stockade. Inside the stockade is a pit some ten feet deep and twelve or fourteen in diameter. The logs that shore its sides are scarred and bruised and dented and splintered in horrible fashion: even the timbers of the stockade bear the marks of manglement, and at the bottom of the pit lie two enormous iron balls, each nearly a ton's weight, and each bearing a handle. One look at the tripod and chain above and a rent cylinder below explains everything. A row of hopelessly decayed engines and tenders are the "subjects" of this grim dissecting-room. "You see," says Experience, "they hook on one of these balls to that chain, and haul it up by the winch in that fenced shed. Then they drop it on whatever is to be broken up, and—well, they dropped it upon that cylinder, and you can see for yourself what happened. Now, it has often struck me that Rider Haggard might use this place for a sort of variety entertainment, you know. No need to put a man in the pit. Just keep him inside the stockade when the ball fell, and let him dodge the splinters. A shell would be a joke to it. We

break up old cannons here. There's the breach of one of them, but some are so curious I've saved them and mounted 'em yonder. They look neat on the red gravel by that fountain—don't they?"

Whatever apparent disorder there might have been in the works, the store department is as clean as a new pin, and stupefying in its naval order. Copper plates, bar, angle, and rod iron, duplicate cranks and slide bars, the piston rods of the *Bradford Leslie* steamer, engine grease, files and hammer-heads—every conceivable article, from leather laces of beltings to head-lamps, necessary for the due and proper working of a long line, is stocked, stacked, piled, and put away in appropriate compartments. In the midst of it all, neck deep in ledgers and indent forms, stands the many-handed Babu, the steam of the engine whose power extends from Howrah to Ghaziabad.

One small set of pigeon-holes contains the bulk of the daily correspondence. It is noticeable that "Sir Bradford Leslie" has a pigeon-hole all to himself. A surreptitious grab at one paper shows that a sergeant-instructor of volunteers, four hundred miles away, has had something done to his kitchen table. And this department knows all about it? *Wah! Wah!* One can only gape vacantly. The E. I. R. is a great chief.

When it cracks its whip, we stand on our hind legs, and walk round the ring backward. Jamalpur does not say this, but that is the feeling in the air.

The Company does everything, and *knows everything*. The gallant apprentice may be a wild youth with an earnest desire to go occasionally "upon the bend." But three times a week, between 7 and 8 p. m., he must attend the night-school and sit at the feet of M. Bonnaud, who teaches him mechanics and statistics so thoroughly that even the awful Government Inspector is pleased. And when there is no night-school the Company will by no means wash its hands of its men out of working-hours. No man can be violently restrained from going to the bad if he insists upon it, but in the service of the Company a man has every warning; his escapades are known, and a judiciously-arranged transfer sometimes keeps a good fellow clear of the down-grade. No one can flatter himself that in the multitude he is overlooked, or believe that between 4 p. m. and 9 a. m. he is at liberty to misdemean himself. Sooner or later, but generally sooner, his goings-on are known, and he is reminded that "Britons never shall be slaves"—to things that destroy good work as well as souls. Maybe the Company acts only in its own interest, but the result is good.

Best and prettiest of the many good and pretty things in Jamalpur is the institute of a Saturday when the Volunteer Band is playing and the tennis courts are full and the babydom of Jamalpur —fat, sturdy children—frolic round the bandstand. The people dance—but big as the institute is, it is getting too small for their dances—they act, they play billiards, they study their newspapers, they play cards and everything else, and they flirt in a sumptuous building, and in the hot weather the gallant apprentice ducks his friend in the big swimming-bath. Decidedly the railway folk make their lives pleasant.

Let us go down southward to the big Giridih collieries and see the coal that feeds the furnace that smelts the iron that makes the sleeper that bears the loco. that pulls the carriage that holds the freight that comes from the country that is made richer by the Great Company Bahadur, the East Indian Railway.

CHAPTER XII

ON THE SURFACE

SOUTHWARD, always southward and easterly, runs the Calcutta Mail from Luckeeserai, till she reaches Madapur in the Sonthal Parganas. From Madapur a train, largely made up of coal-trucks, heads westward into the Hazaribagh district and toward Giridih. A week would not have exhausted "Jamalpur and its environs," as the guide-books say. But since time drives and man must e'en be driven, the weird, echoing bund in the hills above Jamalpur, where the owls hoot at night and hyenas come down to laugh over the grave of "Qullem Roberts, who died from the effects of an encounter with a tiger near this place, A. D. 1864," goes undescribed. Nor is it possible to deal with Monghyr, the headquarters of the district, where one sees for the first time the age of old Bengal in the sleepy, creepy station, built in a time-eaten fort, which runs out into the Ganges, and is full of quaint houses, with fat-legged balustrades on the roofs. Pensioners certainly, and probably a score o' ghosts, live in Monghyr. ' All the country seems haunted. Is there not at Pir Bahar a lonely house

on a bluff, the grave of a young lady, who, thirty years ago, rode her horse down the ***khud*** and perished? Has not Monghyr a haunted house in which tradition say skeptics have seen much more than they could account for? And is it not notorious throughout the countryside that the seven miles of road between Jamalpur and Monghyr are nightly paraded by tramping battalions of spectres, phantoms of an old-time army massacred, who but Sir W. W. Hunter knows how long ago? The common voice attests all these things, and an eerie cemetery packed with blackened, lichened, candle-extinguished tombstones persuades the listener to believe all that he hears. Bengal is second—or third is it?—in order of seniority among the Provinces, and like an old nurse, she tells many witch-tales.

But ghosts have nothing to do with collieries, and that ever-present "Company," the E. I. R., has more or less made Giridih—principally more. "Before the E. I. R. came," say the people, "we had one meal a day. Now we have two." Stomachs do not tell fibs, whatever mouths may say. That "Company," in the course of business, throws about five lakhs a year into the Hazaribah district in the form of wages alone, and Giridih Bazar has to supply the wants of twelve thousand men, women and children. But we have now the authority of a number of high-

souled and intelligent native prints that the Sahib of all grades spends his time in "sucking the blood out of the country," and "flying to England to spend his ill-gotten gains." It is curious to watch a Sahib engaged in this operation. He —but no matter. His way shall be dealt with later on.

Giridih is perfectly mad—quite insane! Geologically, the big, thick books show that the country is in the metamorphic higher grounds that rise out of the alluvial flats of Lower Bengal between the Osri and the Barakar rivers. Translated, this sentence means that you can twist your ankle on pieces of pure white, pinky and yellowish granite, slip over weather-worn sandstone, grievously cut your boots over flakes of trap, and throw hornblende pebbles at the dogs. Never was such a place for stone-throwing as Giridih. The general aspect of the country is falsely park-like, because it swells and sings in a score of grass-covered undulations, and is adorned with plantation-like *sal* jungle. There are low hills on every side, and twelve miles away bearing south the blue bulk of the holy hills of Parasnath, greatest of the Jain Tirthankars, overlooks the world. In Bengal they consider four thousand five hundred feet good enough for a Dagshai or Kasauli, and once upon a time tried to put troops on Parasnath. There was a scarcity

of water, and Thomas of those days found the silence and seclusion prey upon his spirits. Since twenty years, therefore, Parasnath has been abandoned by Her Majesty's Army.

As to Giridih itself, the last few miles of train bring up the reek of the "Black Country." Memory depends on smell. A noseless man is devoid of sentiment, just as a noseless woman, in this country, must be devoid of honor. That first breath of the coal should be the breath of the murky, clouded tract between Yeadon and Dale—or Barnsley, rough and hospitable Barnsley —or Dewsbury and Batley and the Derby Canal, on a Sunday afternoon when the wheels are still and the young men and maidens walk stolidly in pairs. Unfortunately, it is nothing more than Giridih—seven thousand miles away from home and blessed with a warm and genial sunshine, soon to turn into something very much worse. The insanity of the place is visible at the station door. A G. B. T. cart once married a bathing-machine, and they called the child *tum-tum*. You who in flannel and Cawnpore harness drive bamboo-carts about up-country roads, remember that a Giridih *tum-tum* is painfully pushed by four men, and must be entered crawling on all-fours, head first. So strange are the ways of Bengal.

"They drive mad horses in Giridih—animals

that become hysterical as soon as the dusk falls and the countryside blazes with the fires of the great coke ovens. If you expostulate tearfully, they produce another horse, a raw, red fiend whose ear has to be screwed round and round, and round and round, in a twitch before she will by any manner of means, consent to start. Also, the roads carry neat little eighteen inch trenches at their sides, admirably adapted to hold the flying wheel. Skirling about this savage land in the dark, the white population beguile the time by rapturously recounting past accidents, insisting throughout on the super-equine "steadiness" of their cattle. Deep and broad and wide is their jovial hospitality; but somebody—the Tirhoot planters for choice—ought to start a mission to teach the men of Giridih what to drive. They know how, or they would be severally and separately and many times dead, but they do not, they do not indeed, know that animals who stand on one hind leg and beckon with all the rest, or try to pikstick in harness, are not trap-horses worthy of endearing names, but things to be pole-axed. Their feelings are hurt when you say this. "Sit tight," say the men of Giridih; "we're insured! We can't be hurt."

And now with grey hairs, dry mouth, and chattering teeth to the colliers. The E. I. R. estate, bought or leased in perpetuity from the

Serampore Raja, may be about four miles long and between one and two miles across. It is in two pieces, the Serampore field being separated from Karharbari (or Kurhurballi or Kabarbari) field by the property of the Bengal Coal Company. The Raneegunge Coal Association lies to the east of all other workings. So we have three companies at work on about eleven square miles of land.

There is no such thing as getting a full view of the whole place. A short walk over a grassy down gives on to an outcrop of very dirty sandstone, which in the excessive innocence of their hearts most visitors will naturally take to be the coal lying neatly on the surface. Up to this sandstone the path seems to be made of crushed sugar, so white and shiny is the quartz. Over the brow of the down comes in sight the old familiar pit-head wheel, spinning for the dear life, and the eye loses itself in a maze of pumping sheds, red-tiled, mud-walled miners' huts, dotted all over the landscape and railway lines that seem to run on every kind of gradient. There are lines that dip into valleys and disappear round the shoulders of slopes, and lines that career on the tops of rises and disappear over the brow of the slopes. Along these lines whistle and pant metre-gauge engines, some with trucks at their tail and others rattling back to the pit-bank with

the absurd air of a boy late for school that an unemployed engine always assumes. There are six engines in all, and as it is easiest to walk along the lines one sees a good deal of them. They bear not altogether unfamiliar names. Here, for instance, passes the "Cockburn" whistling down a grade with thirty tons of coal at her heels; while the "Whitly" and the "Olpherts" are waiting for their complements of trucks. Now a Mr. T. F. Cockburn was superintendent of these mines nearly thirty years ago, in the days before the chord lines from Kanu to Luckeeserai was built, and all the coal was carted to the latter place: and surely Mr. Olpherts was an engineer who helped to think out a new sleeper. What may these things mean?

"Apotheosis of the manager," is the reply. "Christen the engines after the managers. You'll find Cockburn, Dunn, Whitly, Abbott, Olpherts and Saise knocking about the place. Sounds funny, doesn't it? Doesn't sound so funny, when one of these idiots does his best to derail Saise, though, by putting a line down anyhow. Look at that line! Laid out in knots—by Jove!" To the unprofessional eye the rails seem all correct; but there must be something wrong, because "one of those idiots" is asked why in the name of all he considers sacred he does not ram the ballast properly.

"What would happen if you threw an engine off the line?" "Can't say that I know exactly. You see, our business is to keep them *on*, and we do that. Here's rather a curiosity. You see that pointsman! They say he's an old mutineer, and when he relaxes he boasts of the Sahibs he has killed. He's glad enough to eat the Company's salt now." Such a withered old face was the face of the pointsman at No. 11 point! The information suggested a host of questions, and the answers were these: "You won't be able to understand till you've been down into a mine. We work our men in two ways: some by direct payment—*sirkari*—under our own hand, and some by contractors. The contractor undertakes to deliver us the coal, supplying his own men, tools and props. He's responsible for the safety of his men, and of course the Company knows and sees his work. Just fancy, among these five thousand people, what sort of effect the *khuber* of an accident would produce! It would go all through the Sonthal Parganas. We have any amount of Sonthal besides Mahomedans and Hindus of every possible caste, down to those Musahers who eat pig. They don't require much administering in the civilian sense of the word. On Sundays, as a rule, if any man has had his daughter eloped with, or anything of that kind, he generally comes up to the manager's bungalow to get the

matter put straight. If a man is disabled through accident he knows that as long as he's in the hospital he gets full wages, and the Company pays for the food of any of his women-folk who come to look after him. One of course: not the whole clan. That makes our service popular with the people—poor beggars. Don't you believe that a native is a fool. You can train him to everything except responsibility. There's a rule in the workings that if there is any dangerous work, no—we haven't choke damps, I will show you when we get down—no gang must work without an Englishman to look after them. A native wouldn't be wise enough to understand what the danger was, or where it came in. Even if he did, he'd shirk the responsibility. We can't afford to risk a single life. All our output is just as much as the Company want—about a thousand tons per working day. Three hundred thousand in the year. We could turn out more? Yes—a little. Well, yes, twice as much. I won't go on, because you wouldn't believe me. There's the coal under us, and we work it at any depth from following up an outcrop down to six hundred feet. That is our deepest shaft. We have no necessity to go deeper. At home the mines are sometimes fifteen hundred feet down. Well, the thickness of this coal here varies from anything you please to anything you please. There's

enough of it to last your time and one or two hundred years longer. Perhaps even longer than that. Look at that stuff. That's big coal from the pit."

It was aristocratic-looking coal, just like the picked lumps that are stacked in baskets of coal agencies at home with the printed legend atop "only 23*s* a ton." But there was no picking in this case. The great piled banks were all "equal to samples," and beyond them lay piles of small, broken, "smithy" coal. "The Company doesn't sell to the public. This small, broken coal is an exception. That is sold, but the big stuff is for the engines and the shops. It doesn't cost much to get out, as you say; but our men can earn as much as twelve rupees a month. Very often when they've earned enough to go on with they retire from the concern till they've spent their money and then come on again. It's piecework and they are improvident. If some of them only lived like other natives they would have enough to buy land and cows with. When there's a press of work they make a good deal by overtime, but they don't seem to keep it. You should see Giridih Bazar on a Sunday if you want to know where the money goes. About ten thousand rupees change hands once a week there. If you want to get at the number of people who are indirectly dependent or profit by the E. I. R.

you'll have to conduct a census of your own. After Sunday is over the men generally lie off on Monday and take it easy on Tuesday. Then they work hard for the next four days and make it up. Of course there's nothing in the wide world to prevent a man from resigning and going away to wherever he came from—behind those hills if he's a Sonthal. He loses his employment, that's all. And they have their own point of honor. A man hates to be told by his friends that he has been guilty of *nimakharami*. And now we'll go to breakfast. You shall be 'pitted' to-morrow to any depth you like."

CHAPTER XIII

IN THE DEPTHS

"PITTED to any extent you please." The only difficulty was for Joseph to choose his pit. Giridih was full of them. There was an arch in the side of a little hill, a blackened brick arch leading into thick night. A stationary engine was hauling a procession of coal-laden trucks—"tubs" is the technical word—out of its depths. The tubs were neither pretty nor clean. "We are going down in those when they are emptied. Put on your helmet, and *keep* it on and keep your head down." The trucks were unloaded into the wagons of the metre-gauge colliery line in this wise. Drawn out by the engine along the line, they were pulled on to a platform of smooth iron, dexterously swung round by black demons in attendance, and slid on to what is technically termed a "tippler." This is a most crafty arrangement, partaking of the nature of a drop and a safety-stirrup. The tub goes forward until it is brought up by the curved ends of the metals it travels on, and sticks in a sort of gigantic stirrup. Then, gravely and solemnly, it overbalances itself, turns through half a circle, and shoots its load into the

big truck below. Some of the "tipplers" are fixed on traveling platforms and can be moved down the whole length of a waiting coal-train. The Ratel—is it not?—is the eccentric beast in the Zoo who runs round his cage and turns head-over-heels at a given place. These absurd tubs are Ratels, and the gravity of their self-arranged somersaults is very comic.

But there is nothing mirth-provoking in going down a coal-mine—even though it be only a shallow incline running to one hundred and forty feet vertical below the earth. "Get into the tub and lie down. Hang it, no! This is not a railway carriage: you can't see the country out of the windows. *Lie down* in the dust and don't lift your head. Let her go!"

The tubs strain on the wire rope and slide down fourteen hundred feet of incline, at first through a chastened gloom, and then through darkness. An absurd sentence from a trial report rings in the head: "About this time prisoner expressed a desire for the consolations of religion." A hand with a reeking flare-lamp hangs over the edge of the tub, and there is a glimpse of a blackened *solah topee* near it, for those accustomed to the pits have a merry trick of going down sitting or crouching on the coupling of the rear tub. The noise is deafening, and the roof is very close indeed. The tubs bump, and the occupant crouches

lovingly in the coal dust. What would happen if the train went off the line? The desire for the "consolations of religion" grows keener and keener as the air grows closer and closer. The tubs stop in darkness spangled, not lifted, by the light of the flare-lamps which many black devils carry. Underneath and on both sides there is the greasy blackness of the coal, and, above, a roof of grey sandstone, smooth as the flow of a river at evening. "Now, remember that if you don't keep your *topee* on, you'll get your head broken, because you will forget to stoop. If you hear any tubs coming up behind you step off to one side. There's a tramway under your feet, and be careful not to trip over it."

The miner has a gait as peculiarly his own as Tommy's measured paces or the blue jacket's roll. Big men who slouch in the light of day become almost things of beauty underground. Their foot is on their native heather; and the slouch is a very necessary act of homage to the great earth, which if a man observe not, he shall without doubt have his *solah topee*—bless the man who invented pith hats!—grievously cut and dented, and himself dowered with an aching head.

The road turns and winds and the roof becomes lower, but those accursed tubs still rattle by on the tramways. The roof throws back their noises, and when all the place is full of a grum-

bling and a growling, how under earth is one to know whence danger will turn up next? Also, the air is choking, and brings about, to the unacclimatized, a singing in the ears, a hotness of the eyeballs, and a jumping of the heart. "That's because the pressure here is different from the pressure up above. It'll wear off in a minute. *We* don't notice it. Wait till you get down a four-hundred-foot pit. *Then* your ears will begin to sing, if you like." Most people know the One Night of each hot weather—that still, clouded night just before the rain breaks, when there seems to be no more breathable air under the bowl of the pitiless skies, and all the weight of the silent, dark house lies on the chest of the sleep-hunter. This is the feeling in a coal-mine—only more so—much more so, for the darkness is the "gross darkness of the inner sepulchre." It is hard to see which is the black coal and which the passage driven through it. From far away, down the side galleries, comes the regular beat of the pick—thick and muffled as the beat of the laboring heart. "Six men to a gang, and they aren't allowed to work alone. They make six-foot drives through the coal—two and sometimes three men working together. The rest clear away the stuff and load it into the tubs. We have no props in this gallery because we have a roof as good as a ceiling. The coal lies under the sandstone here.

It's beautiful sandstone." It *was* beautiful sandstone—as hard as a billiard table and devoid of any nasty little bumps and jags which cut into the hat.

There was a roaring down one road—the roaring of infernal fires. This is not a pleasant thing to hear in the dark. It is too suggestive. "That's our ventilating shaft. Can't you feel the air getting brisker? Come and look."

Imagine a great iron-bound crate of burning coal, hanging over a gulf of darkness faintly showing the brickwork of the base of a chimney. "We're at the bottom of the shaft. That fire makes a draught that sucks up the foul air from the bottom of the pit. There's another down-draw shaft in another part of the mine where the clean air comes in. We aren't going to set the mines on fire. There's an earth and *kutcha* brick floor at the bottom of the pit; the crate hangs over. It isn't so deep as you think." Then a devil—a naked devil—came in with a pitchfork and fed the spouting flames. This was perfectly in keeping with the landscape, but it was not pretty. "That's only a little shaft. We've got one, an oval, eighteen feet by twelve, and four hundred and fifty feet deep. They aren't sunk like wells. Our sandstones are stronger than any bricks. We brick through the twenty feet of surface soil, but we can sink straight through

the sandstone, knowing that the sinkings will stand. Now we'll go to the place where they are taking out the coal."

More trucks, more muffled noises, more darkness made visible, and more devils—male and female—coming out of darkness and vanishing. Then a picture to be remembered. A great Hall of Eblis, twenty feet from inky-black floor to grey roof, upheld by huge pillars of shining coal and filled with flitting and passing devils. On a shattered pillar near the roof stood a naked man, his flesh olive-colored in the light of the lamps, hewing down a mass of coal that still clove to the roof. Behind him was the wall of darkness, and when the lamps shifted he disappeared like a ghost. The devils were shouting directions, and the man howled in reply, resting on his pick and wiping the sweat from his brow. When he smote the coal crushed and slid and rumbled from the darkness into the darkness, and the devils cried *shabash!* The man stood erect like a bronze statue, he twisted and bent himself like a Japanese grotesque, and anon threw himself on his side after the manner of the dying gladiator. Then spoke the still small voice of fact: "A first-class workman if he would only stick to it. But as soon as he makes a little money he lies off and spends it. That's the last of a pillar that we've knocked out. See here. These pillars of coal

are square, about thirty feet each way. As you can see, we make the pillar first by cutting out all the coal between. Then we drive a square tunnel, about seven feet wide, through and across the pillar, propping it with baulks. There's one fresh cut."

Two tunnels crossing at right angles had been driven through a pillar which in its under-cut condition seemed like the rough draft of a statue for an elephant. "When the pillar stands only on four legs we chip away one leg at a time from a square to an hour-glass shape, and then either the whole of the pillar crashes down from the roof or else a quarter or a half. If the coal lies against the sandstones it carries away clear, but in some places it brings down stone and rubbish with it. The chipped-away legs of the pillars are called stooks." "Who has to make the last cut that breaks a leg through?" "Oh! Englishmen of all sorts. We can't trust natives for the job unless it's very easy. The natives take kindly to the pillar work though. They are paid just as much for their coal as though they had hewed it out of the solid. Of course we take very good care to see that the roof doesn't come in on us. You would never understand how and why we prop our roofs with those piles of sleepers. Anyway, you can see that we cannot take out a whole line of pillars. We work 'em *en echelon*,

and those big beams you see running from floor to roof are our indicators. They show when the roof is going to give. Oh! dear no, there's no dramatic effect about it. No splash, you know. Our roofs give plenty of warning by cracking and then *baito* slowly. The parts of the work that we have cleared out and allowed to fall in are called goafs'. You're on the edge of a goaf' now. All that darkness there marks the limit of the mine. We have worked that out piecemeal, and the props are gone and the place is down. The roof of any pillar-working is tested every morning by tapping—pretty hard tapping."

"Hi yi! yi!" shout all the devils in chorus, and the Hall of Eblis is full of rolling sound. The olive man has brought down an *avalanche* of coal. "It is a sight to see the whole of one of the pillars come away. They make an awful noise. It would startle you out of your wits. Some of 'em are ninety feet square. But there's not an atom of risk."

("Not an atom of risk." Oh, genial and courteous host, when you turned up next day blacker than any sweep that ever swept, with a neat, half-inch gash on your forehead—won by cutting a "stook" and getting caught by a bounding coal-knob—how long and earnestly did you endeavor to show that "stook-cutting"

was an employment as harmless and unexciting as wool-samplering?)

"If you knew about mining, you'd see that our ways are rather primitive, but they're cheap, and they're safe as houses. Doms and Bauris, Kols and Beldars don't understand refinements in mining. They'd startle an English pit where there was fire-damp. Do you know it's a solemn fact that if you drop a Davy lamp or snatch it quickly you can blow a whole English pit inside out with all the miners? Good for us that we don't know what fire-damp is here. We can use the flare-lamps."

After the first feeling of awe and wonder is worn out, a mine becomes monotonous. How could a mine be anything but monotonous. Mile after mile of blackness stretching before the eyes as far as sight will carry, which is not saying much, even when one has been some time accustomed to the lack of light. There is only the humming, palpitating darkness, the rumble of the tubs and the endless procession of galleries to arrest the attention. And one pit to the uninitiated is as like to another as two peas. Tell a miner this and he laughs—slowly and softly. To him the pits have each distinct personalities, and each must be dealt with a different way. A descent from the pit-bank, and not from the mouth of an incline, is sickening—channel-pas-

sage sickening. Over pulley-wheels, mounted on shearlegs thirty, forty, or fifty feet high, passes the wire rope that is fastened to the "cages"—the two lifts on which the empty coal tubs go down and the loaded ones come up. A cage either has wooden guides at the four corners of the shaft or grips wire guide-ropes to steady it as it is let down. An engine drives the drum on which the wire-rope hauling line is coiled.

Very curious is a pit-bank when the work is in full swing. A hammer close to the winding engine strikes one, the driver places his foot on the lever: there is a roar far down the shaft, and an iron-railed platform with the loaded tub on it flies up and settles with a clang on four catches. The tub is run out into a "tippler" and discharges itself into a coal-truck. By the time it is run back empty into the second cage, a loaded truck is made ready at the bottom of the shaft, and as the empty truck sinks the full rises.

The hammer strikes three. The "winder" by the engine pulls the lever thrice, no empty tub is put into the cage, and the speed of the rise is not so great. There springs up a miner. He is a man, if we could get through the coal dust, and on his account special precautions are taken, and woe betide the pit-men who neglect them. All these things are lovely to look at. But the actual descent is not so good. If you swing a child

vehemently, the little innocent is likely to complain that he feels as though his "tummy were left in the air." Now this is the exact sensation of dropping into a pit. The hangman adjusts the white cap. That is to say, you cram your hat down and go—drop away from the day and every one you ever loved, *and* your "tummy." That comes down later. You arrive destitute of any inside, and are told for your comfort that in some of the English mines you can go down two thousand feet at the rate of sixty miles an hour. Two hundred feet at a considerably slower rate is enough—quite enough. Try it once or twice, and see what the air is like.

The return journey is said to possess an element of risk. For this reason. If the "winder" of the engine at the top stopped to think, or hunted for a flea, or got a fit, or was choked by a fly, his engine would continue to wind and wind until the cage was hauled up to the pulley-wheels thirty feet in the air, where it would have three courses open to it. It might jam, break the wire rope and fall back unbridled into the pit, or part into several pieces, or be hauled with one tremendous bound right over the pulley-wheels and come down a bundle of shattered ribs. In any case the occupant would not be in a position to describe the precise nature of the accident. But a native "winder" knows these things, and thinks of

them every time the three taps come to his ears. For him "over-winding" would mean loss of post and pay. Therefore he does not overwind. He generally has a keen rivalry with a fellow-winder at another pit-bank, and lays himself out to see if he cannot bring more tons of coal to the bank than his *bhai*.

CHAPTER XIV

THE PERILS OF THE PITS

An engineer, who has built a bridge, can strike you nearly dead with professional facts; the captain of a seventy horse power Ganges river-steamer can, in one hour, tell legends about the Sandheads and the James and Mary shoal sufficient to fill half a *Pioneer*, but a couple of days spent on, above, and in a coal mine yields more mixed information than two engineers and three captains. It is hopeless to pretend to understand it all.

When your host says: "Ah, such an one is a thundering good fault-reader!" you smile hazily, and by way of keeping up the conversation, adventure on the statement that fault-reading and palmistry are very popular amusements. Then men laugh consumedly, and enter into explanations.

Every one knows that coal strata, in common with women, horses, and official superiors, have "faults" caused by some colic of the earth in the days when things were settling into their places. A coal seam is suddenly sliced off as a pencil is cut through with one slanting blow of the pen-

knife, and one-half is either pushed up or pushed down any number of feet. The miners work the seam till they come to this break-off, and then call for an expert to "read the fault." It is sometimes very hard to discover whether the sliced-off beam has gone up or down. Theoretically, the end of the broken piece should show the direction. Practically its indications are not always clear. Then a good "fault-reader," who must more than know geology, is a useful man, and is much prized, for the Giridih fields are full of faults and "dykes." Tongues of what was once molten lava thrust themselves sheer into the coal, and the disgusted miner finds that for about twenty feet on each side of the tongue all the coal has been burned away.

The head of the mine is supposed to foresee these things and ever so many more. He can tell you, without looking at the map, what is the geological formation of any thousand square miles of India; he knows as much about brick-work and the building of houses, arches, and shafts as an average P. W. D. man; he has not only to know the intestines of a pumping or winding engine, but must be able to take them to pieces with his own hands, indicate on the spot such parts as need repair, and make drawings of anything that requires renewal; he knows how to lay out and build railways with a grade

of one in twenty-seven; he has to carry in his head all the signals and points between and over which his locomotive engines work; he has to be an electrician capable of controlling the apparatus that fires the dynamite charges in the pits, and must thoroughly understand boring operations with thousand-foot drills. Over and above this, he must know by name, at least, one thousand of the men on the works, and must fluently speak the vernaculars of the low castes. If he has Sonthali, which is more elaborate than Greek, so much the better for him. He must know how to handle men of all grades, and, while himself holding aloof, must possess sufficient grip of the men's private lives to be able to see at once the merits of a charge of attempted abduction preferred by a clucking, croaking Kol against a fluent English-speaking Brahmin. For he is literally the Light of Justice, and to him the injured husband or the wrathful father looks for redress. He must be on the spot and take all responsibility when any specially risky job is under way in the pit, and he can claim no single hour of the day or the night for his own. From eight in the morning till one in the afternoon he is coated with coal-dust and oil. From one till eight in the evening he has office work. After eight o'clock he is free to attend to anything that he may be wanted for.

This is a soberly-drawn picture of a life that *Sahibs* on the mines actually enjoy. They are spared all private socio-official worry, for the Company, in its mixture of State and private interest, is as perfectly cold-blooded and devoid of bias as any great, grinding Department of the Empire. If certain things be done, well and good. If certain things be not done the defaulter goes, and his place is filled by another. The conditions of service are graven on stone. There may be generosity: there undoubtedly is justice, but above all there is freedom within broad limits. No irrepressible shareholder cripples the executive arm with suggestions and restrictions, and no private piques turn men's blood to gall within them. Therefore men work like horses and are happy.

When he can snatch a free hour, the grimy, sweating, cardigan-jacketed, ammunition-booted, pick-bearing ruffian turns into a well-kept English gentleman, who plays a good game of billiards, and has a batch of new books from England every week. The change is sudden, but in Giridih nothing is startling. It is right and natural that a man should be alternately Valentine and Orson, specially Orson. It is right and natural to drive—always behind a mad horse—away and away toward the lonely hills till the flaming coke ovens become glow-worms on the dark horizon, and in the wilderness to find a

lovely English maiden teaching squat, filthy Sonthal girls how to become Christians. Nothing is strange in Giridih, and the stories of the pits, the raffle of conversation that a man picks up as he passes, are quite in keeping with the place. Thanks to the law, which enacts that an Englishman must look after the native miners, and if any be killed, he and he alone has to explain satisfactorily that the accident was not due to preventable causes, the death-roll is kept astoundingly low. In one "bad" half-year six men out of the five thousand were killed, in another four, and in another none at all. Given "butcher bills" as small as these, it is not astonishing that the men in charge do their best to cut them down at any cost of time and sleep. As has been said before, a big accident would scare off the workers, for, in spite of the age of the mines —nearly thirty years—the hereditary pitman has not yet been evolved. But to small accidents the men are orientally apathetic. Be pleased to read of a death among the five thousand.

A gang has been ordered to cut clay for the luting of the coke furnaces. The clay is piled in a huge bank in the open sunlight above ground. A coolie hacks and hacks till he has hewn out a small cave with twenty feet of clay above him. Why should he trouble to climb up the bank and bring down the eave of the cave? It is easier to

cut in. The Sirdar of the gang is watching round the shoulder of the bank. The coolie cuts lazily as he stands: Sunday is very near, and he will get gloriously drunk in Giridih Bazar with his week's earnings. He digs his own grave stroke by stroke, for he has not sense enough to see that undercut clay is dangerous. He is a Sonthal from the hills. There is a smash and a dull thud, and his grave has shut down upon him in an *avalanche* of heavy-caked clay.

The Sirdar calls to the Babu of the Ovens, and with the promptitude of his race the Babu loses his head. He runs puffily, without giving orders, anywhere, everywhere. Finally he runs to the *Sahib's* house. The *Sahib* is at the other end of the collieries. He runs back. The *Sahib* has gone home to wash. Then his indiscretion strikes him. He should have sent runners—fleet-footed boys from the coal-screening gangs. He sends them and they fly. One catches the *Sahib* just changed after his bath. "There is a man dead at such a place"—he gasps, omitting to say whether it is a surface or a pit accident. On goes the grimy pit kit, and in three minutes the *Sahib's* dogcart is flying to the place indicated.

They have dug out the Sonthal. His head is smashed in, spine and breastbone are broken, and the gang Sirdar, bowing double, throws the blame of the accident on the poor, shapeless,

battered dead. "I had warned him, but he would not listen! *Twice* I warned him! These men are witnesses."

The Babu is shaking like a jelly. "Oh, sar, I have never seen a man killed before! Look at that eye, sar! I should have sent runners. I ran everywhere. I ran to your house. You were not in. I was running for hours. It was not my fault! It was the fault of the gang Sirdar." He wrings his hands and gurgles. The best of accountants, but the poorest of coroners is he. No need to ask how the accident happened. No need to listen to the Sirdar and his "witnesses." The Sonthal had been a fool, but it was the Sirdar's business to protect him against his own folly. "Has he any people here?"

"Yes, his *rukni*, his kept-woman, and his sister's brother-in-law. His home is far-off."

The sister's brother-in-law breaks through the crowd howling for vengeance on the Sirdar. He will send for the police, he will have the price of his *bhai's* blood full tale. The windmill arms and the angry eyes fall, for the *Sahib* is making the report of the death.

"Will this Sirkar give me *pensin?* I am his wife," a woman clamors, stamping her pewter-ankleted feet. "He was killed in your service. Where is his *pensin?* I am his wife." "You lie! You're his *rukni*. Keep quiet! Go! The

pensin comes to *us.*" The sister's brother-in-law is not a refined man, but the *rukni* is his match. They are silenced. The Sahib takes the report, and the body is borne away. Before to-morrow's sun rises the Sirdar may find himself a simple "surface-coolie," earning nine pice a day; and, in a week some Sonthal woman behind the hills may discover that she is entitled to draw monthly great wealth from the coffers of the *Sirkar.* But this will not happen if the sister's brother-in-law can prevent it. He goes off swearing at the *rukni.*

But, in the meantime, what have the rest of the dead man's gang been doing? They have, if you please, abating not one stroke, dug out all the clay, and would have it verified. They have seen their comrade die. He is dead. *Bus!* Will the Sirdar take the tale of clay? And yet, were twenty men to be crushed by their own carelessness in the pit, these impassive workers would scatter like panic-stricken horses.

But, turning from this sketch, let us set in order some of the stories of the pits. These are quaint tales. The miner-folk laugh when they tell them. In some of the mines the coal is blasted out by the dynamite which is fired by electricity from a battery on the surface. Two men place the charges, and then signal to be drawn up in the cage which hangs in the pit-eye. On one occa-

sion two natives were entrusted with the job. They performed their parts beautifully till the end, when the vaster idiot of the two scrambled into the cage, gave signal, and was hauled up before his friend could enter.

Thirty or forty yards up the shaft all possible danger for those in the cage was over, and the charge was accordingly exploded. Then it occurred to the man in the cage that his friend stood a very good chance of being by this time riven to pieces and choked.

But the friend was wise in his generation. He had missed the cage, but found a coal-tub—one of the little iron trucks—and turning this upside down, had crawled into it. His account of the explosion has never been published. When the charge went off, his shelter was battered in so much, that men had to hack him out, for the tub had made, as it were, a tinned sardine of its occupant. He was absolutely uninjured, but his feelings were lacerated. On reaching the pit-bank his first words were: "I do not desire to go down the pit with *that* man any more." His wish had been already gratified for "that man" had fled. Later on, the story goes, when "that man" found that the guilt of murder was not at his door, he returned, and was made a surface-coolie, and his *bhai-band* jeered at him as they passed to their better-paid occupation.

Occasionally there are mild cyclones in the pits. An old working, perhaps a mile away, will collapse: a whole gallery sinking in bodily. Then the displaced air rushes through the inhabited mine, and, to quote their own expression, blows the pitmen about "like dry leaves." Few things are more amusing than the spectacle of a burly Tyne-side foreman who, failing to dodge round a corner in time, is "put down" by the wind, sitting fashion, on a knobby lump of coal.

But most impressive of all is a tale they tell of a fire in a pit many years ago. The coal caught —light. They had to send earth and bricks down the shaft and build great dams across the galleries to choke the fire. Imagine the scene, a few hundred feet underground, with the air growing hotter and hotter each moment, and the carbonic acid gas trickling through the dams. After a time the rough dams gaped, and the gas poured in afresh, and the Englishmen went down and leeped the cracks between roof and dam-sill with anything they could get. Coolies fainted, and had to be taken away, but no one died, and behind the kutcha dams they built great masonry ones, and bested that fire; though for a long time afterward, whenever they pumped water into it, the steam would puff out from crevices in the ground above.

It is a queer life that they lead, these men of

the coal-fields, and a "big" life to boot. To describe one-half of their labors would need a week at the least, and would be incomplete then. "If you want to see anything," they say, "you should go over to the Baragunda copper-mines; you should look at the Barakar ironworks; you should see our boring operations five miles away; you should see how we sink pits; you should, above all, see Giridih Bazar on a Sunday. Why, you haven't seen anything. There's no end of a Sonthal Mission hereabouts. All the little dev—dears have gone on a picnic. Wait till they come back, and see 'em learning to learn."

Alas! one cannot wait. At the most one can but thrust an impertinent pen skin-deep into matters only properly understood by specialists.

CHAPTER XV

IN AN OPIUM FACTORY

On the banks of the Ganges, forty miles below Benares as the crow flies, stands the Ghazipur Factory, an opium mint as it were, whence issue the precious cakes that are to replenish the coffers of the Indian Government. The busy season is setting in, for with April the opium comes in from districts after having run the gauntlet of the district officers of the Opium Department, who will pass it as fit for use. Then the really serious work begins under a roasting sun. The opium arrives by *challans*, regiments of one hundred jars, each holding one maund and each packed in a basket and sealed atop. The district officer submits forms—never was such a place for forms as the Ghazipur Factory—showing the quality and weight of each pot, and with the jars come a ziladar responsible for the safe carriage of the *challans*, their delivery and their virginity. If any pots are broken or tampered with an unfortunate individual called the import officer, and appointed to work like a horse from dawn till dewy eve, must examine the ziladar in charge of the *challan* and reduce his statement to

writing. Fancy getting any native to explain how a *matka* has been smashed. But the perfect flower is about as valuable as silver.

Then all the pots have to be weighed, and the weights—Calcutta Mint, if you please—and the beams must be daily tested. The weight of each pot is recorded on the pot, in a book, and goodness knows where else, and every one has to sign certificates that the weighing is correct. *Nota bene.* The pots have been weighed once in the district and once in the factory. Therefore a certain number of them are taken at random and weighed afresh before they are opened. This is only the beginning of the long series of checks. All sorts of inquiries are made about light pots, and then the testing begins. Every single, serially-numbered pot has to be tested for quality. A native called the *purkhea* drives his fist into the opium, rubs and smells it, and calls out the class for the benefit of the opium examiner. A sample picked between finger and thumb is thrown into a jar, and if the opium examiner thinks the *purkhea* has said sooth, the class of the jar is marked in chalk, and everything is entered in a book. Every ten samples are put in a locked box with duplicated keys, and sent over to the laboratory for assay. With the tenth boxful—and this marks the end of the *challan* of a hundred jars—the Englishman in charge of the test-

ing signs the test paper, and enters the name of the native tester and sends it over to the laboratory. For convenience sake, it may be as well to say that, unless distinctly stated to the contrary, every single thing in Ghazipur is locked, and every operation is conducted under more than police supervision.

In the laboratory each set of ten samples is thoroughly mixed by hand, a quarter ounce lump is then tested for starch adulteration by iodine which turns the decoction blue, and, if necessary, for gum adulteration by alcohol which makes the decoction filmy. If adulteration be shown, all the ten pots of that set are tested separately. When the sinful pot is discovered, all the opium is tested in four-pound lumps. Over and above this test, three samples of one hundred grains each are taken from the *jummakaroed* set of ten samples, dried on a steam table and then weighed for consistence. The result is written down in a ten-columned form in the assay register, and by the mean result are those ten pots paid for. This, after everything has been done in duplicate and countersigned, completes the test and assay. If a district officer has classed the opium in a glaringly wrong way, he is thus caught and reminded of his error. No one trusts any one in Ghazipur. They are always weighing, testing and assaying.

Before the opium can be used it must be "alligated" in big vats. The pots are emptied into these, and special care is taken that none of the drug sticks to the hands of the coolies. Opium has a special knack of doing this, and therefore coolies are searched at most inopportune moments. There are a good many Mahomedans in Ghazipur, and they would all like a little opium. The pots after emptying are smashed up and scraped, and heaved down the steep river bank of the factory, where they help to keep the Ganges in its place, so many are they, and the little earthen bowls in which the opium cakes are made. People are forbidden to wander about the river front of the factory in search of remnants of opium on the strands. There are no remnants, but people will not credit this. After vatting, as has been said, the big vats, holding from one to three thousand maunds, are probed with test rods, and the samples are treated just like the samples of the *challans*, everybody writing everything in duplicate and signing it. Having secured the mean consistence of each vat, the requisite quantity of each blend—Calcutta Mint scales again, and an unlimited quantity of supervision—is weighed out, thrown into an alligation vat, of 250 maunds, and worked up by the feet of coolies, who hang on to ropes and drag their legs painfully through the probe. Try to wade

in mud of 70° consistency, and see what it is like.

This completes the working of the opium. It is now ready to be made into cakes after a final assay. Man has done nothing to improve it since it streaked the capsule of the poppy—this mysterious drug. Perhaps half a hundred sinners have tried to adulterate it and been paid out accordingly, but that has been the utmost. April, May and June are the months for receiving and manufacturing opium, and in the winter months come the packing and the dispatch.

At the beginning of the cold weather Ghazipur holds locked up a trifle, say, of three and a half millions sterling in opium. Now, there may be only a paltry three-quarters of a million on hand, and that is going out at the rate of one Viceroy's salary for two and a half years per diem. For such a flea-bite it seems absurd to prohibit smoking in the factory or to stud the place with tanks and steam fire-engines. Really, Ghazipur is unnecessarily timid. A long time ago some one threatened to cast down a tree sacred to Mahadeo. In a very few days, just as soon as Mahadeo got news of the insult, a fire broke out and damaged thousands of pounds' worth of opium.

But all this time we have not gone through the factory. There are ranges and ranges of gigantic godowns, huge barns that can hold over half-a-

million pounds' worth of opium. There are acres of bricked floor, regiments on regiments of chests; and yet more godowns and more godowns. The heart of the whole is the laboratory which is full of the sick faint smell of a *chandu-khana*. This makes Ghazipur indignant. "That's the smell of opium. We don't need *chandu* here. You don't know what real opium smells like. *Chandu-khana* indeed! That's refined opium under treatment for morphia, and *cocaine* and perhaps *narcoine*." "Very well, let's see some of the real opium made for the China market." "We shan't be making any for another six weeks at earliest; but we can show you one cake made, and you must imagine two hundred and fifty men making 'em as hard as they can up to one every four minutes." A *Sirdar* of cake-makers is called, and appears with a miniature *dhobi's* washing board on which he sits, a little square box of dark wood, a tin cup, an earthen bowl, and a mass of poppy petal *chupattis*. A larger earthen bowl holds a mass of what looks like bad Cape tobacco. "What's that?" "Trash—dried poppy leaves, not petals, broken up and used for packing cakes in. You'll see presently." The cake-maker sits down and receives a lump of opium, weighed out, of one seer seven chittacks and a half, neither more nor less. "That's pure opium of seventy consist-

ence." Every allowance is weighed. "What are they weighing that brown water for?" "That's *lewa*—thin opium at fifty consistence. It's the paste. He gets four chittacks and a half." "And do they weigh the *chupattis?*" "Of course. Five chittacks of *chupattis*—about sixteen *chupattis* of all three kinds." This is overwhelming. This *sirdar* takes a brass hemispherical cup and wets it with a rag. Then he tears a *chupatti* across so that it fits into the cup without a wrinkle, and pastes it with the thin opium, the *lewa*. After this his actions become incomprehensible, but there is evidently a deep method in them. *Chupatti* after *chupatti* is torn across, dressed with *lewa* and pressed down into the cup, the fringes hanging over the edge of the bowl. He takes half *chupattis* and fixes them skilfully, picking now first-class and now second-class ones. Everything is gummed into everything else with the *lewa*, and he presses all down by twisting his wrists inside the bowl. "He is making the *gattia* now." *Gattia* means a tight coat at any rate, so there is some ray of enlightenment. Torn *chupatti* follows torn *chupatti*, till the bowl is lined half-an-inch deep with them, and they all glisten with the greasy *lewa*. He now takes up an ungummed *chupatti* and fits in carefully all round. The opium is dropped tenderly upon this, and a curious washing motion of the hand fol-

lows. The opium is drawn up into a cone as one by one the *sirdar* picks up the overlapping portions of the *chupattis* that hung outside the bowl and plasters them against the drug. He makes a clever waist-belt while he keeps all the flags in place, and so strengthens the midriff of the lump. He tucks in the top of the cone with his thumbs, brings the fringe of *chupattis* over to close the opening, and pastes fresh leaves upon all. The cone has now taken a spherical shape, and he gives it the finishing touch by gumming a large *chupatti*, one of the "moon" kind, set aside from the first, on the top, so deftly that no wrinkle is visible. The cake is now complete, and all the Celestials of the middle kingdom shall not be able to disprove that it weighs two seers one and three-quarter chittacks, with a play of half a chittack for the personal equation.

The Sirdar takes it up and rubs it in the bran-like poppy trash in the big bowl, so that two-thirds of it are powdered with the trash and one-third is fair and shiny *chupatti*. "That is the difference between a Ghazipur and a Patna cake. Our cakes have always an unpowdered head. The Patna ones are rolled in trash all over. You can tell them anywhere by that mark. Now we'll cut this one open and you can see how a section looks." One half of an inch as nearly as may be is the thickness of the *chupatti* shell all

round the cake, and even in this short time so firmly has the *lewa* set that any attempt at sundering the skins of *chupatti* is followed by the rending of the poppy petals that compose the *chupatti*. "You've seen in detail what a cake is made of—that is to say, pure opium 70 consistence, poppy-petal pancakes, *lewa*, of 52'-50 consistence, and a powdering of poppy-trash." "But why are you so particular about the shell?" "Because of the China market. The Chinaman likes every inch of the stuff we send him, and uses it. He boils the shell and gets out every grain of the *lewa* used to gum it together. He smokes that after he has dried it. Roughly speaking, the value of the cake we've just cut open is two pound ten. All the time it is in our hands we have to look after it and check it, and treat it as though it were gold. It mustn't have too much moisture in it, or it will swell and crack, and if it is too dry John Chinaman won't have it. He values his opium for qualities just the opposite of those in Smyrna opium. Smyrna opium gives as much as ten per cent. of morphia, and is nearly solid—90 consistence. Our opium does not give more than three or three and a half per cent. of morphia on the average, and, as you know it is only 70 or in Patna 75 consistence. That is the drug the Chinaman likes. He can get the maximum of extract out of it by soaking it in

hot water, and he likes the flavor. He knows it is absolutely pure too, and it comes to him in good condition." "But has nobody found out any patent way of making these cakes and putting skins on them by machinery?" "Not *yet*. Poppy to poppy. There's nothing better. Here are a couple of cakes made in 1849, when they tried experiments in wrapping them in paper and cloth. You can see that they are beautifully wrapped and sewn like cricket balls, but it would take about half-an-hour to make such cakes, and we could not be sure of keeping the aroma in them. Nothing like poppy plant for poppy drug."

And this is the way the drug, which yields such a splendid income to the Indian Government, is prepared. To tell how it is thereafter kept in store, packed for export, put upon the market at certain fixed periods, and shipped away, for John Chinaman's consumption chiefly, would be a tame story. The interest lies in the actual manufacture and manipulation of the cakes, and we have seen how this is done in the busy factory at Ghazipur.

THE END.

AMERICAN NOTES

AT THE GOLDEN GATE

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I

AT THE GOLDEN GATE

"Serene, indifferent to fate,
Thou sittest at the Western Gate;
Thou seest the white seas fold their tents,
Oh, warder of two continents;
Thou drawest all things, small and great,
To thee, beside the Western Gate."

THIS is what Bret Harte has written of the great city of San Francisco, and for the past fortnight I have been wondering what made him do it.

There is neither serenity nor indifference to be found in these parts; and evil would it be for the continents whose wardship were intrusted to so reckless a guardian.

Behold me pitched neck-and-crop from twenty days of the high seas into the whirl of California, deprived of any guidance, and left to draw my own conclusions. Protect me from the wrath of an outraged community if these letters be ever read by American eyes! San Francisco is a mad city—inhabited for the most part by perfectly insane people, whose women are of a remarkable beauty.

When the "City of Pekin" steamed through the Golden Gate, I saw with great joy that the blockhouse which guarded the mouth of the "finest harbor in the world, sir," could be silenced by two gunboats from Hong Kong with safety, comfort, and despatch. Also, there was not a single American vessel of war in the harbor.

This may sound bloodthirsty; but remember, I had come with a grievance upon me—the grievance of the pirated English books.

Then a reporter leaped aboard, and ere I could gasp held me in his toils. He pumped me exhaustively while I was getting ashore, demanding of all things in the world news about Indian journalism. It is an awful thing to enter a new land with a new lie on your lips. I spoke the truth to the evil-minded Custom House man who turned my most sacred raiment on a floor composed of stable refuse and pine splinters; but the reporter overwhelmed me not so much by his poignant audacity as his beautiful ignorance. I am sorry now that I did not tell him more lies as I passed into a city of three hundred thousand white men. Think of it! Three hundred thousand white men and women gathered in one spot, walking upon real pavements in front of plate-glass-windowed shops, and talking something that at first hearing was not very different from English. It was only when I had tangled

myself up in a hopeless maze of small wooden houses, dust, street refuse, and children who played with empty kerosene tins, that I discovered the difference of speech.

"You want to go to the Palace Hotel?" said an affable youth on a dray. "What in hell are you doing here, then? This is about the lowest ward in the city. Go six blocks north to corner of Geary and Markey, then walk around till you strike corner of Gutter and Sixteenth, and that brings you there."

I do not vouch for the literal accuracy of these directions, quoting but from a disordered memory.

"Amen," I said. "But who am I that I should strike the corners of such as you name? Peradventure they be gentlemen of repute, and might hit back. Bring it down to dots, my son."

I thought he would have smitten me, but he didn't. He explained that no one ever used the word "street," and that every one was supposed to know how the streets ran, for sometimes the names were upon the lamps and sometimes they weren't. Fortified with these directions, I proceeded till I found a mighty street, full of sumptuous buildings four and five stories high, but paved with rude cobblestones, after the fashion of the year 1.

Here a tram-car, without any visible means of support, slid stealthily behind me and nearly struck me in the back. This was the famous cable car of San Francisco, which runs by gripping an endless wire rope sunk in the ground, and of which I will tell you more anon. A hundred yards further there was a slight commotion in the street, a gathering together of three or four, something that glittered as it moved very swiftly. A ponderous Irish gentleman, with priest's cords in his hat and a small nickel-plated badge on his fat bosom, emerged from the knot supporting a Chinaman who had been stabbed in the eye and was bleeding like a pig. The bystanders went their ways, and the Chinaman, assisted by the policeman, his own. Of course this was none of my business, but I rather wanted to know what had happened to the gentleman who had dealt the stab. It said a great deal for the excellence of the municipal arrangement of the town that a surging crowd did not at once block the street to see what was going forward. I was the sixth man and the last who assisted at the performance, and my curiosity was six times the greatest. Indeed, I felt ashamed of showing it.

There were no more incidents till I reached the Palace Hotel, a seven-storied warren of humanity with a thousand rooms in it. All the travel books

will tell you about hotel arrangements in this country. They should be seen to be appreciated. Understand clearly—and this letter is written after a thousand miles of experiences—that money will not buy you service in the West. When the hotel clerk—the man who awards your room to you and who is supposed to give you information—when that resplendent individual stoops to attend to your wants he does so whistling or humming or picking his teeth, or pauses to converse with some one he knows. These performances, I gather, are to impress upon you that he is a free man and your equal. From his general appearance and the size of his diamonds he ought to be your superior. There is no necessity for this swaggering self-consciousness of freedom. Business is business, and the man who is paid to attend to a man might reasonably devote his whole attention to the job. Out of office hours he can take his coach and four and pervade society if he pleases.

In a vast marble-paved hall, under the glare of an electric light, sat forty or fifty men, and for their use and amusement were provided spittoons of infinite capacity and generous gape. Most of the men wore frock-coats and top-hats—the things that we in India put on at a wedding-breakfast, if we possess them—but they all spat. They spat on principle. The spittoons were on

the staircases, in each bedroom—yea, and in chambers even more sacred than these. They chased one into retirement, but they blossomed in chiefest splendor round the bar, and they were all used, every reeking one of them.

Just before I began to feel deathly sick another reporter grappled me. What he wanted to know was the precise area of India in square miles. I referred him to Whittaker. He had never heard of Whittaker. He wanted it from my own mouth, and I would not tell him. Then he swerved off, just like the other man, to details of journalism in our own country. I ventured to suggest that the interior economy of a paper most concerned the people who worked it.

"That's the very thing that interests us," he said. "Have you got reporters anything like our reporters on Indian newspapers?"

"We have not," I said, and suppressed the "thank God" rising to my lips.

"Why haven't you?" said he.

"Because they would die," I said.

It was exactly like talking to a child—a very rude little child. He would begin almost every sentence with, "Now tell me something about India," and would turn aimlessly from one question to the other without the least continuity. I was not angry, but keenly interested. The man was a revelation to me. To his questions I re-

turned answers mendacious and evasive. After all, it really did not matter what I said. He could not understand. I can only hope and pray that none of the readers of the "Pioneer" will ever see that portentous interview. The man made me out to be an idiot several sizes more driveling than my destiny intended, and the rankness of his ignorance managed to distort the few poor facts with which I supplied him into large and elaborate lies. Then, thought I, "the matter of American journalism shall be looked into later on. At present I will enjoy myself."

No man rose to tell me what were the lions of the place. No one volunteered any sort of conveyance. I was absolutely alone in this big city of white folk. By instinct I sought refreshment, and came upon a bar-room full of bad Salon pictures in which men with hats on the backs of their heads were wolfing food from a counter. It was the institution of the "free lunch" I had struck. You paid for a drink and got as much as you wanted to eat. For something less than a rupee a day a man can feed himself sumptuously in San Francisco, even though he be a bankrupt. Remember this if ever you are stranded in these parts.

Later I began a vast but unsystematic exploration of the streets. I asked for no names. It was enough that the pavements were full of

white men and women, the streets clanging with traffic, and that the restful roar of a great city rang in my ears. The cable cars glided to all points of the compass at once. I took them one by one till I could go no further. San Francisco has been pitched down on the sand bunkers of the Bikaneer desert. About one-fourth of it is ground reclaimed from the sea—any old-timers will tell you all about that. The remainder is just ragged, unthrifty sand hills, to-day pegged down by houses.

From an English point of view there has not been the least attempt at grading those hills, and indeed you might as well try to grade the hillocks of Sind. The cable cars have for all practical purposes made San Francisco a dead level. They take no count of rise or fall, but slide equably on their appointed courses from one end to the other of a six-mile street. They turn corners almost at right angles, cross other lines, and for aught I know may run up the sides of houses. There is no visible agency of their flight, but once in awhile you shall pass a five-storied building humming with machinery that winds up an everlasting wire cable, and the initiated will tell you that here is the mechanism. I gave up asking questions. If it pleases Providence to make a car run up and down a slit in the ground for many miles, and if for twopence halfpenny I can ride in that car,

why shall I seek the reasons of the miracle? Rather let me look out of the windows till the shops give place to thousands and thousands of little houses made of wood (to imitate stone), each house just big enough for a man and his family. Let me watch the people in the cars and try to find out in what manner they differ from us, their ancestors.

It grieves me now that I cursed them (in the matter of book piracy), because I perceived that my curse is working and that their speech is becoming a horror already. They delude themselves into the belief that they talk English—the English—and I have already been pitied for speaking with "an English accent." The man who pitied me spoke, so far as I was concerned, the language of thieves. And they all do. Where we put the accent forward they throw it back, and *vice versâ;* where we give the long "a" they use the short, and words so simple as to be past mistaking they pronounce somewhere up in the dome of their heads. How do these things happen?

Oliver Wendell Holmes says that the Yankee school-marm, the cider and the salt codfish of the Eastern States, are responsible for what he calls a nasal accent. I know better. They stole books from across the water without paying for 'em, and the snort of delight was fixed in their

nostrils forever by a just Providence. That is why they talk a foreign tongue to-day.

"Cats is dogs, and rabbits is dogs, and so's parrots. But this 'ere tortoise is an insect, so there ain't no charge," as the old porter said.

A Hindoo is a Hindoo and a brother to the man who knows his vernacular. And a Frenchman is French because he speaks his own language. But the American has no language. He is dialect, slang, provincialism, accent, and so forth. Now that I have heard their voices, all the beauty of Bret Harte is being ruined for me, because I find myself catching through the roll of his rhythmical prose the cadence of his peculiar fatherland. Get an American lady to read to you "How Santa Claus Came to Simpson's Bar," and see how much is, under her tongue, left of the beauty of the original.

But I am sorry for Bret Harte. It happened this way. A reporter asked me what I thought of the city, and I made answer suavely that it was hallowed ground to me, because of Bret Harte. That was true.

"Well," said the reporter, "Bret Harte claims California, but California don't claim Bret Harte. He's been so long in England that he's quite English. Have you seen our cracker factories or the new offices of the 'Examiner'?"

He could not understand that to the outside

world the city was worth a great deal less than the man. I never intended to curse the people with a provincialism so vast as this.

But let us return to our sheep—which means the sea-lions of the Cliff House. They are the great show of San Francisco. You take a train which pulls up the middle of the street (it killed two people the day before yesterday, being unbraked and driven absolutely regardless of consequences), and you pull up somewhere at the back of the city on the Pacific beach. Originally the cliffs and their approaches must have been pretty, but they have been so carefully defiled with advertisements that they are now one big blistered abomination. A hundred yards from the shore stood a big rock covered with the carcasses of the sleek sea-beasts, who roared and rolled and walloped in the spouting surges. No bold man had painted the creatures sky-blue or advertised newspapers on their backs, wherefore they did not match the landscape, which was chiefly hoarding. Some day, perhaps, whatever sort of government may obtain in this country will make a restoration of the place and keep it clean and neat. At present the sovereign people, of whom I have heard so much already, are vending cherries and painting the virtues of "Little Bile Beans" all over it.

Night fell over the Pacific, and the white sea-

fog whipped through the streets, dimming the splendors of the electric lights. It is the use of this city, her men and women folk, to parade between the hours of eight and ten a certain street called Kearney Street, where the finest shops are situated. Here the click of high heels on the pavement is loudest, here the lights are brightest, and here the thunder of the traffic is most overwhelming. I watched Young California, and saw that it was, at least, expensively dressed, cheerful in manner, and self-asserting in conversation. Also the women were very fair. Perhaps eighteen days aboard ship had something to do with my unreserved admiration. The maidens were of generous build, large, well groomed, and attired in raiment that even to my inexperienced eyes must have cost much. Kearney Street at nine o'clock levels all distinctions of rank as impartially as the grave. Again and again I loitered at the heels of a couple of resplendent beings, only to overhear, when I expected the level voice of culture, the staccato "Sez he," "Sez I" that is the mark of the white servant-girl all the world over.

This was depressing because, in spite of all that goes to the contrary, fine feathers ought to make fine birds. There was wealth—unlimited wealth—in the streets, but not an accent that would not have been dear at fifty cents. Where-

fore, revolving in my mind that these folk were barbarians, I was presently enlightened and made aware that they also were the heirs of all the ages, and civilized after all. There appeared before me an affable stranger of prepossessing appearance, with a blue and an innocent eye. Addressing me by name, he claimed to have met me in New York, at the Windsor, and to this claim I gave a qualified assent. I did not remember the fact, but since he was so certain of it, why, then—I waited developments.

"And what did you think of Indiana when you came through?" was the next question.

It revealed the mystery of previous acquaintance and one or two other things. With reprehensible carelessness my friend of the light-blue eye had looked up the name of his victim in the hotel register, and read "Indiana" for India.

The provincialism with which I had cursed his people extended to himself. He could not imagine an Englishman coming through the States from west to east instead of by the regularly ordained route. My fear was that in his delight in finding me so responsive he would make remarks about New York and the Windsor which I could not understand. And, indeed, he adventured in this direction once or twice, asking me what I thought of such and such streets, which from his tone I gathered to be anything but respectable.

It is trying to talk unknown New York in almost unknown San Francisco. But my friend was merciful. He protested that I was one after his own heart, and pressed upon me rare and curious drinks at more than one bar. These drinks I accepted with gratitude, as also the cigars with which his pockets were stored. He would show me the life of the city. Having no desire to watch a weary old play again, I evaded the offer and received in lieu of the devil's instruction much coarse flattery. Curiously constituted is the soul of man. Knowing how and where this man lied, waiting idly for the finale, I was distinctly conscious, as he bubbled compliments in my ear, of soft thrills of gratified pride stealing from hat-rim to boot-heels. I was wise, quoth he—anybody could see that with half an eye; sagacious, versed in the ways of the world, an acquaintance to be desired; one who had tasted the cup of life with discretion.

All this pleased me, and in a measure numbed the suspicion that was thoroughly aroused. Eventually the blue-eyed one discovered, nay, insisted, that I had a taste for cards (this was clumsily worked in, but it was my fault, for in that I met him half-way and allowed him no chance of good acting). Hereupon I laid my head upon one side and simulated unholy wisdom, quoting odds and ends of poker talk, all

ludicrously misapplied. My friend kept his countenance admirably, and well he might, for five minutes later we arrived, always by the purest of chance, at a place where we could play cards and also frivol with Louisiana State Lottery tickets. Would I play?

"Nay," said I, "for to me cards have neither meaning nor continuity; but let us assume that I am going to play. How would you and your friends get to work? Would you play a straight game, or make me drunk, or—well, the fact is, I'm a newspaper man, and I'd be much obliged if you'd let me know something about bunco steering."

My blue-eyed friend erected himself into an obelisk of profanity. He cursed me by his gods —the right and left bower; he even cursed the very good cigars he had given me. But, the storm over, he quieted down and explained. I apologized for causing him to waste an evening, and we spent a very pleasant time together.

Inaccuracy, provincialism, and a too hasty rushing to conclusions, were the rocks that he had split on, but he got his revenge when he said:

"How would I play with you? From all the poppy-cock (*Anglice* bosh) you talked about poker, I'd ha' played a straight game, and skinned you. I wouldn't have taken the trouble to make you drunk. You never knew anything of the

game, but how I was mistaken in going to work on you, makes me sick."

He glared at me as though I had done him an injury. To-day I know how it is that year after year, week after week, the bunco steerer, who is the confidence trick and the card-sharper man of other climes, secures his prey. He clavers them over with flattery as the snake clavers the rabbit. The incident depressed me because it showed I had left the innocent East far behind and was come to a country where a man must look out for himself. The very hotels bristled with notices about keeping my door locked and depositing my valuables in a safe. The white man in a lump is bad. Weeping softly for O-Toyo (little I knew then that my heart was to be torn afresh from my bosom) I fell asleep in the clanging hotel.

Next morning I had entered upon the deferred inheritance. There are no princes in America—at least with crowns on their heads—but a generous-minded member of some royal family received my letter of introduction. Ere the day closed I was a member of the two clubs, and booked for many engagements to dinner and party. Now, this prince, upon whose financial operations be continual increase, had no reason, nor had the others, his friends, to put himself out for the sake of one Briton more or less, but he rested not till

he had accomplished all in my behalf that a mother could think of for her *débutante* daughter.

Do you know the Bohemian Club of San Francisco? They say its fame extends over the world. It was created, somewhat on the lines of the Savage, by men who wrote or drew things, and has blossomed into most unrepublican luxury. The ruler of the place is an owl—an owl standing upon a skull and cross-bones, showing forth grimly the wisdom of the man of letters and the end of his hopes for immortality. The owl stands on the staircase, a statue four feet high; is carved in the wood-work, flutters on the frescoed ceiling, is stamped on the note-paper, and hangs on the walls. He is an ancient and honorable bird. Under his wing 'twas my privilege to meet with white men whose lives were not chained down to routine of toil, who wrote magazine articles instead of reading them hurriedly in the pauses of office-work, who painted pictures instead of contenting themselves with cheap etchings picked up at another man's sale of effects. Mine were all the rights of social intercourse, craft by craft, that India, stony-hearted stepmother of collectors, has swindled us out of. Treading soft carpets and breathing the incense of superior cigars, I wandered from room to room studying the paintings in which the members of the club had caricatured themselves, their associates, and their

aims. There was a slick French audacity about the workmanship of these men of toil unbending that went straight to the heart of the beholder. And yet it was not altogether French. A dry grimness of treatment, almost Dutch, marked the difference. The men painted as they spoke—with certainty. The club indulges in revelries which it calls "jinks"—high and low, at intervals—and each of these gatherings is faithfully portrayed in oils by hands that know their business. In this club were no amateurs spoiling canvas, because they fancied they could handle oils without knowledge of shadows or anatomy—no gentleman of leisure ruining the temper of publishers and an already ruined market with attempts to write, "because everybody writes something these days."

My hosts were working, or had worked for their daily bread with pen or paint, and their talk for the most part was of the shop—shoppy—that is to say, delightful. They extended a large hand of welcome, and were as brethren, and I did homage to the owl and listened to their talk. An Indian club about Christmas-time will yield, if properly worked, an abundant harvest of queer tales; but at a gathering of Americans from the uttermost ends of their own continent, the tales are larger, thicker, more spinous, and even more azure than any Indian variety. Tales of the war

I heard told by an ex-officer of the South over his evening drink to a colonel of the Northern army, my introducer, who had served as a trooper in the Northern Horse, throwing in emendations from time to time. "Tales of the Law," which in this country is an amazingly elastic affair, followed from the lips of a judge. Forgive me for recording one tale that struck me as new. It may interest the up-country Bar in India.

Once upon a time there was Samuelson, a young lawyer, who feared not God, neither regarded the Bench. (Name, age, and town of the man were given at great length.) To him no case had ever come as a client, partly because he lived in a district where lynch law prevailed, and partly because the most desperate prisoner shrunk from intrusting himself to the mercies of a phenomenal stammerer. But in time there happened an aggravated murder—so bad, indeed, that by common consent the citizens decided, as a prelude to lynching, to give the real law a chance. They could, in fact, gambol round that murder. They met—the court in its shirt-sleeves—and against the raw square of the Court House window a temptingly suggestive branch of a tree fretted the sky. No one appeared for the prisoner, and, partly in jest, the court advised young Samuelson to take up the case.

"The prisoner is undefended, Sam," said the

court. "The square thing to do would be for you to take him aside and do the best you can for him."

Court, jury, and witness then adjourned to the veranda, while Samuelson led his client aside to the Court House cells. An hour passed ere the lawyer returned alone. Mutely the audience questioned.

"May it p-p-please the c-court," said Samuelson, "my client's case is a b-b-b-bad one—a d-d-amn bad one. You told me to do the b-b-best I c-could for him, judge, so I've jest given him y-your b-b-bay gelding, an' told him to light out for healthier c-climes, my p-p-professional opinion being he'd be hanged quicker'n h-h-hades if he dallied here. B-by this time my client's 'bout fifteen mile out yonder somewheres. That was the b-b-best I could do for him, may it p-p-please the court."

The young man, escaping punishment in lieu of the prisoner, made his fortune ere five years.

Other voices followed, with equally wondrous tales of riata-throwing in Mexico and Arizona, of gambling at army posts in Texas, of newspaper wars waged in godless Chicago (I could not help being interested, but they were not pretty tricks), of deaths sudden and violent in Montana and Dakota, of the loves of half-breed maidens in the South, and fantastic huntings for gold in mys-

terious Alaska. Above all, they told the story of the building of old San Francisco, when the "finest collection of humanity on God's earth, sir, started this town, and the water came up to the foot of Market Street." Very terrible were some of the tales, grimly humorous the others, and the men in broadcloth and fine linen who told them had played their parts in them.

"And now and again when things got too bad they would toll the city bell, and the Vigilance Committee turned out and hanged the suspicious characters. A man didn't begin to be suspected in those days till he had committed at least one unprovoked murder," said a calm-eyed, portly old gentleman.

I looked at the pictures around me, the noiseless, neat-uniformed waiter behind me, the oak-ribbed ceiling above, the velvet carpet beneath. It was hard to realize that even twenty years ago you could see a man hanged with great pomp. Later on I found reason to change my opinion. The tales gave me a headache and set me thinking. How in the world was it possible to take in even one thousandth of this huge, roaring, many-sided continent? In the tobacco-scented silence of the sumptuous library lay Professor Bryce's book on the American Republic.

"It is an omen," said I. "He has done all things in all seriousness, and he may be pur-

chased for half a guinea. Those who desire information of the most undoubted, must refer to his pages. For me is the daily round of vagabondage, the recording of the incidents of the hour and intercourse with the traveling-companion of the day. I will not 'do' this country at all."

And I forgot all about India for ten days while I went out to dinners and watched the social customs of the people, which are entirely different from our customs, and was introduced to men of many millions. These persons are harmless in their earlier stages—that is to say, a man worth three or four million dollars may be a good talker, clever, amusing, and of the world; a man with twice that amount is to be avoided, and a twenty million man is—just twenty millions. Take an instance. I was speaking to a newspaper man about seeing the proprietor of his journal, as in my innocence I supposed newspaper men occasionally did. My friend snorted indignantly:

"See him! Great Scott! No. If he happens to appear in the office, I have to associate with him; but, thank Heaven! outside of that I move in circles where he cannot come."

And yet the first thing I have been taught to believe is that money was everything in America!

AMERICAN POLITICS

II

AMERICAN POLITICS

I HAVE been watching machinery in repose after reading about machinery in action.

An excellent gentleman, who bears a name honored in the magazine, writes, much as Disraeli orated, of "the sublime instincts of an ancient people," the certainty with which they can be trusted to manage their own affairs in their own way, and the speed with which they are making for all sorts of desirable goals. This he called a statement or purview of American politics.

I went almost directly afterward to a saloon where gentlemen interested in ward politics nightly congregate. They were not pretty persons. Some of them were bloated, and they all swore cheerfully till the heavy gold watch-chains on their fat stomachs rose and fell again; but they talked over their liquor as men who had power and unquestioned access to places of trust and profit.

The magazine writer discussed theories of government; these men the practice. They had been there. They knew all about it. They banged their fists on the table and spoke of

political "pulls," the vending of votes, and so forth. Theirs was not the talk of village babblers reconstructing the affairs of the nation, but of strong, coarse, lustful men fighting for spoil, and thoroughly understanding the best methods of reaching it.

I listened long and intently to speech I could not understand—or but in spots.

It was the speech of business, however. I had sense enough to know that, and to do my laughing outside the door.

Then I began to understand why my pleasant and well-educated hosts in San Francisco spoke with a bitter scorn of such duties of citizenship as voting and taking an interest in the distribution of offices. Scores of men have told me, without false pride, that they would as soon concern themselves with the public affairs of the city or state as rake muck with a steam-shovel. It may be that their lofty disdain covers selfishness, but I should be very sorry habitually to meet the fat gentleman with shiny top-hats and plump cigars in whose society I have been spending the evening.

Read about politics as the cultured writer of the magazine regards 'em, and then, and not till then, pay your respects to the gentlemen who run the grimy reality.

I'm sick of interviewing night editors who lear

their chair against the wall, and, in response to my demand for the record of a prominent citizen, answer: "Well, you see, he began by keeping a saloon," etc. I prefer to believe that my informants are treating me as in the old sinful days in India I was used to treat the wondering globe-trotter. They declare that they speak the truth, and the news of dog politics lately vouchsafed to me in groggeries inclines me to believe, but I won't. The people are much too nice to slang-ander as recklessly as I have been doing.

Besides, I am hopelessly in love with about eight American maidens—all perfectly delightful till the next one comes into the room.

O-Toyo was a darling, but she lacked several things—conversation for one. You cannot live on giggles. She shall remain unmarried at Nagasaki, while I roast a battered heart before the shrine of a big Kentucky blonde, who had for a nurse when she was little a negro "mammy."

By consequence she has welded on California beauty, Paris dresses, Eastern culture, Europe trips, and wild Western originality, the queer, dreamy superstitions of the quarters, and the result is soul-shattering. And she is but one of many stars.

Item, a maiden who believes in education and possesses it, with a few hundred thousand dollars to boot and a taste for slumming.

Item, the leader of a sort of informal salon where girls congregate, read papers, and daringly discuss metaphysical problems and candy—a sloe-eyed, black-browed, imperious maiden she.

Item, a very small maiden, absolutely without reverence, who can in one swift sentence trample upon and leave gasping half a dozen young men.

Item, a millionairess, burdened with her money, lonely, caustic, with a tongue keen as a sword, yearning for a sphere, but chained up to the rock of her vast possessions.

Item, a typewriter maiden earning her own bread in this big city, because she doesn't think a girl ought to be a burden on her parents, who quotes Théophile Gautier and moves through the world manfully, much respected for all her twenty inexperienced summers.

Item, a woman from cloud-land who has no history in the past or future, but is discreetly of the present, and strives for the confidences of male humanity on the grounds of "sympathy" (methinks this is not altogether a new type).

Item, a girl in a "dive," blessed with a Greek head and eyes, that seem to speak all that is best and sweetest in the world. But woe is me! She has no ideas in this world or the next beyond the consumption of beer (a commission on each bottle), and protests that she sings the songs allotted

to her nightly without more than the vaguest notion of their meaning.

Sweet and comely are the maidens of Devonshire; delicate and of gracious seeming those who live in the pleasant places of London; fascinating for all their demureness the damsels of France, clinging closely to their mothers, with large eyes wondering at the wicked world; excellent in her own place and to those who understand her is the Anglo-Indian "spin" in her second season; but the girls of America are above and beyond them all. They are clever, they can talk—yea, it is said that they think. Certainly they have an appearance of so doing which is delightfully deceptive.

They are original, and regard you between the brows with unabashed eyes as a sister might look at her brother. They are instructed, too, in the folly and vanity of the male mind, for they have associated with "the boys" from babyhood, and can discerningly minister to both vices or pleasantly snub the possessor. They possess, moreover, a life among themselves, independent of any masculine associations. They have societies and clubs and unlimited tea-fights where all the guests are girls. They are self-possessed, without parting with any tenderness that is their sex-right; they understand; they can take care of themselves; they are superbly independent.

When you ask them what makes them so charming, they say:

"It is because we are better educated than your girls, and—and we are more sensible in regard to men. We have good times all round, but we aren't taught to regard every man as a possible husband. Nor is he expected to marry the first girl he calls on regularly."

Yes, they have good times, their freedom is large, and they do not abuse it. They can go driving with young men and receive visits from young men to an extent that would make an English mother wink with horror, and neither driver nor drivee has a thought beyond the enjoyment of a good time. As certain, also, of their own poets have said:

> "Man is fire and woman is tow,
> And the devil he comes and begins to blow."

In America the tow is soaked in a solution that makes it fire-proof, in absolute liberty and large knowledge; consequently, accidents do not exceed the regular percentage arranged by the devil for each class and climate under the skies.

But the freedom of the young girl has its drawbacks. She is—I say it with all reluctance—irreverent, from her forty-dollar bonnet to the buckles in her eighteen-dollar shoes. She talks flippantly to her parents and men old enough to

be her grandfather. She has a prescriptive right to the society of the man who arrives. The parents admit it.

This is sometimes embarrassing, especially when you call on a man and his wife for the sake of information—the one being a merchant of varied knowledge, the other a woman of the world. In five minutes your host has vanished. In another five his wife has followed him, and you are left alone with a very charming maiden, doubtless, but certainly not the person you came to see. She chatters, and you grin, but you leave with the very strong impression of a wasted morning. This has been my experience once or twice. I have even said as pointedly as I dared to a man:

"I came to see you."

"You'd better see me in my office, then. The house belongs to my women folk—to my daughter, that is to say."

He spoke the truth. The American of wealth is owned by his family. They exploit him for bullion. The women get the ha'pence, the kicks are all his own. Nothing is too good for an American's daughter (I speak here of the money-eyed classes).

The girls take every gift as a matter of course, and yet they develop greatly when a catastrophe arrives and the man of many millions goes up or

goes down, and his daughters take to stenography or typewriting. I have heard many tales of heroism from the lips of girls who counted the principals among their friends. The crash came, Mamie, or Hattie, or Sadie, gave up their maid, their carriages and candy, and with a No. 2 Remington and a stout heart set about earning their daily bread.

"And did I drop her from the list of my friends? No, sir," said a scarlet-lipped vision in white lace; "that might happen to us any day."

It may be this sense of possible disaster in the air that makes San Francisco society go with so captivating a rush and whirl. Recklessness is in the air. I can't explain where it comes from, but there it is. The roaring winds of the Pacific make you drunk to begin with. The aggressive luxury on all sides helps out the intoxication, and you spin forever "down the ringing grooves of change" (there is no small change, by the way, west of the Rockies) as long as money lasts. They make greatly and they spend lavishly; not only the rich, but the artisans, who pay nearly five pounds for a suit of clothes, and for other luxuries in proportion.

The young men rejoice in the days of their youth. They gamble, yacht, race, enjoy prize-fights and cock-fights, the one openly, the other in secret; they establish luxurious clubs; they break

themselves over horse-flesh and other things, and they are instant in a quarrel. At twenty they are experienced in business, embark in vast enterprises, take partners as experienced as themselves, and go to pieces with as much splendor as their neighbors. Remember that the men who stocked California in the fifties were physically, and, as far as regards certain tough virtues, the pick of the earth. The inept and the weakly died *en route*, or went under in the days of construction. To this nucleus were added all the races of the Continent—French, Italian, German, and, of course, the Jew.

The result you can see in the large-boned, deep-chested, delicate-handed women, and long, elastic, well-built boys. It needs no little golden badge swinging from the watch-chain to mark the native son of the golden West, the country-bred of California.

Him I loved because he is devoid of fear, carries himself like a man, and has a heart as big as his books. I fancy, too, he knows how to enjoy the blessings of life that his province so abundantly bestows upon him. At least, I heard a little rat of a creature with hock-bottle shoulders explaining that a man from Chicago could pull the eye-teeth of a Californian in business.

Well, if I lived in fairyland, where cherries were as big as plums, plums as big as apples,

and strawberries of no account, where the procession of the fruits of the seasons was like a pageant in a Drury Lane pantomime and the dry air was wine, I should let business slide once in a way and kick up my heels with my fellows. The tale of the resources of California—vegetable and mineral—is a fairy-tale. You can read it in books. You would never believe me.

All manner of nourishing food, from sea-fish to beef, may be bought at the lowest prices, and the people are consequently well-developed and of a high stomach. They demand ten shillings for tinkering a jammed lock of a trunk; they receive sixteen shillings a day for working as carpenters; they spend many sixpences on very bad cigars, which the poorest of them smoke, and they go mad over a prize-fight. When they disagree they do so fatally, with fire-arms in their hands, and on the public streets. I was just clear of Mission Street when the trouble began between two gentlemen, one of whom perforated the other.

When a policeman, whose name I do not recollect, "fatally shot Ed Hearney" for attempting to escape arrest, I was in the next street. For these things I am thankful. It is enough to travel with a policeman in a tram-car, and, while he arranges his coat-tails as he sits down, to catch sight of a loaded revolver. It is enough to know

that fifty per cent. of the men in the public saloons carry pistols about them.

The Chinaman waylays his adversary, and methodically chops him to pieces with his hatchet. Then the press roars about the brutal ferocity of the pagan.

The Italian reconstructs his friend with a long knife. The press complains of the waywardness of the alien.

The Irishman and the native Californian in their hours of discontent use the revolver, not once, but six times. The press records the fact, and asks in the next column whether the world can parallel the progress of San Francisco. The American who loves his country will tell you that this sort of thing is confined to the lower classes. Just at present an ex-judge who was sent to jail by another judge (upon my word I cannot tell whether these titles mean anything) is breathing red-hot vengeance against his enemy. The papers have interviewed both parties, and confidently expect a fatal issue.

Now, let me draw breath and curse the negro waiter, and through him the negro in service generally. He has been made a citizen with a vote, consequently both political parties play with him. But that is neither here nor there. He will commit in one meal every *bêtise* that a *senllion* fresh from the plow-tail is capable of, and he will

continue to repeat those faults. He is as complete a heavy-footed, uncomprehending, bungle-fisted fool as any *mem-sahib* in the East ever took into her establishment. But he is according to law a free and independent citizen—consequently above reproof or criticism. He, and he alone, in this insane city, will wait at table (the Chinaman doesn't count).

He is untrained, inept, but he will fill the place and draw the pay. Now, God and his father's fate made him intellectually inferior to the Oriental. He insists on pretending that he serves tables by accident—as a sort of amusement. He wishes you to understand this little fact. You wish to eat your meals, and, if possible, to have them properly served. He is a big, black, vain baby and a man rolled into one.

A colored gentleman who insisted on getting me pie when I wanted something else, demanded information about India. I gave him some facts about wages.

"Oh, hell!" said he, cheerfully, "that wouldn't keep me in cigars for a month."

Then he fawned on me for a ten-cent piece. Later he took it upon himself to pity the natives of India. "Heathens," he called them—this woolly one, whose race has been the butt of every comedy on the native stage since the beginning. And I turned and saw by the head

upon his shoulders that he was a Yoruba man, if there be any truth in ethnological castes. He did his thinking in English, but he was a Yoruba negro, and the race type had remained the same throughout his generations. And the room was full of other races—some that looked exactly like Gallas (but the trade was never recruited from that side of Africa), some duplicates of Cameroon heads, and some Kroomen, if ever Kroomen wore evening dress.

The American does not consider little matters of descent, though by this time he ought to know all about "damnable heredity." As a general rule he keeps himself very far from the negro, and says things about him that are not pretty. There are six million negroes, more or less, in the States, and they are increasing. The American, once having made them citizens, cannot unmake them. He says, in his newspapers, they ought to be elevated by education. He is trying this, but it is likely to be a long job, because black blood is much more adhesive than white, and throws back with annoying persistence.

When the negro gets religion he returns directly as a hiving bee to the first instincts of his people. Just now a wave of religion is sweeping over some of the Southern States.

Up to the present two Messiahs and a Daniel have appeared, and several human sacrifices have

been offered up to these incarnations. The Daniel managed to get three young men, who he insisted were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, to walk into a blast furnace, guaranteeing non-combustion. They did not return. I have seen nothing of this kind, but I have attended a negro church. They pray, or are caused to pray by themselves in this country. The congregation were moved by the spirit to groans and tears, and one of them danced up the aisle to the mourners' bench. The motive may have been genuine. The movements of the shaken body were those of a Zanzibar stick dance, such as you see at Aden on the coal-boats, and even as I watched the people, the links that bound them to the white man snapped one by one, and I saw before me the *hubshi* (woolly hair) praying to a God he did not understand. Those neatly dressed folk on the benches, and the grey-headed elder by the window, were savages, neither more nor less.

What will the American do with the negro? The South will not consort with him. In some States miscegenation is a penal offence. The North is every year less and less in need of his services.

And he will not disappear. He will continue as a problem. His friends will urge that he is as good as the white man. His enemies—well, you

can guess what his enemies will do from a little incident that followed on a recent appointment by the President. He made a negro an assistant in a post office where—think of it!—he had to work at the next desk to a white girl, the daughter of a colonel, one of the first families of Georgia's modern chivalry, and all the weary, weary rest of it. The Southern chivalry howled, and hanged or burned some one in effigy. Perhaps it was the President, and perhaps it was the negro—but the principle remains the same. They said it was an insult. It is not good to be a negro in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

But this is nothing to do with San Francisco and her merry maidens, her strong, swaggering men, and her wealth of gold and pride. They bore me to a banquet in honor of a brave lieutenant—Carlin, of the "Vandalia"—who stuck by his ship in the great cyclone at Apia and comported himself as an officer should. On that occasion—'twas at the Bohemian Club—I heard oratory with the roundest of o's, and devoured a dinner the memory of which will descend with me into the hungry grave.

There were about forty speeches delivered, and not one of them was average or ordinary. It was my first introduction to the American eagle screaming for all it was worth. The lieutenant's

heroism served as a peg from which the silver-tongued ones turned themselves loose and kicked.

They ransacked the clouds of sunset, the thunderbolts of heaven, the deeps of hell, and the splendor of the resurrection for tropes and metaphors, and hurled the result at the head of the guest of the evening.

Never since the morning stars sung together for joy, I learned, had an amazed creation witnessed such superhuman bravery as that displayed by the American navy in the Samoa cyclone. Till earth rotted in the phosphorescent star-and-stripe slime of a decayed universe, that godlike gallantry would not be forgotten. I grieve that I cannot give the exact words. My attempt at reproducing their spirit is pale and inadequate. I sat bewildered on a coruscating Niagara of blatherumskite. It was magnificent—it was stupendous—and I was conscious of a wicked desire to hide my face in a napkin and grin. Then, according to rule, they produced their dead, and across the snowy table-cloths dragged the corpse of every man slain in the Civil War, and hurled defiance at "our natural enemy" (England, so please you), "with her chain of fortresses across the world." Thereafter they glorified their nation afresh from the beginning, in case any detail should have been overlooked, and that made me

uncomfortable for their sakes. How in the world can a white man, a sahib, of our blood, stand up and plaster praise on his own country? He can think as highly as he likes, but this open-mouthed vehemence of adoration struck me almost as indelicate. My hosts talked for rather more than three hours, and at the end seemed ready for three hours more.

But when the lieutenant—such a big, brave, gentle giant—rose to his feet, he delivered what seemed to me as the speech of the evening. I remember nearly the whole of it, and it ran something in this way:

"Gentlemen—It's very good of you to give me this dinner and to tell me all these pretty things, but what I want you to understand—the fact is, what we want and what we ought to get at once, is a navy—more ships—lots of 'em"—

Then we howled the top of the roof off, and I for one fell in love with Carlin on the spot. Wallah! He was a man.

The prince among merchants bid me take no heed to the warlike sentiments of some of the old generals.

"The sky-rockets are thrown in for effect," quoth he, "and whenever we get on our hind legs we always express a desire to chaw up England. It's a sort of family affair."

And, indeed, when you come to think of it,

there is no other country for the American public speaker to trample upon.

France has Germany; we have Russia; for Italy Austria is provided; and the humblest Pathan possesses an ancestral enemy.

Only America stands out of the racket, and therefore to be in fashion makes a sand-bag of the mother country, and hangs her when occasion requires.

"The chain of fortresses" man, a fascinating talker, explained to me after the affair that he was compelled to blow off steam. Everybody expected it.

When we had chanted "The Star Spangled Banner" not more than eight times, we adjourned. America is a very great country, but it is not yet heaven, with electric lights and plush fittings, as the speakers professed to believe. My listening mind went back to the politicians in the saloon, who wasted no time in talking about freedom, but quietly made arrangements to impose their will on the citizens.

"The judge is a great man, but give thy presents to the clerk," as the proverb saith.

And what more remains to tell? I cannot write connectedly, because I am in love with all those girls aforesaid, and some others who do not appear in the invoice. The typewriter is an institution of which the comic papers make much

capital, but she is vastly convenient. She and a companion rent a room in a business quarter, and, aided by a typewriting machine, copy MSS. at the rate of six annas a page. Only a woman can operate a typewriting machine, because she has served apprenticeship to the sewing machine. She can earn as much as one hundred dollars a month, and professes to regard this form of bread-winning as her natural destiny. But, oh! how she hates it in her heart of hearts! When I had got over the surprise of doing business with and trying to give orders to a young woman of coldly, clerky aspect intrenched behind gold-rimmed spectacles, I made inquiries concerning the pleasures of this independence. They liked it—indeed they did. 'Twas the natural fate of almost all girls—the recognized custom in America—and I was a barbarian not to see it in that light.

Well, and after?" said I. "What happens?"

"We work for our bread."

"And then what do you expect?"

"Then we shall work for our bread."

"Till you die?"

"Ye-es—unless"—

"Unless what? This is your business, you know. A man works until he dies."

"So shall we"—this without enthusiasm—"I suppose."

Said the partner in the firm, audaciously:

"Sometimes we marry our employés—at least, that's what the newspapers say."

The hand banged on half a dozen of the keys of the machine at once. "Yet I don't care. I hate it—I hate it—I hate it—and you needn't look so!"

The senior partner was regarding the rebel with grave-eyed reproach.

"I thought you did," said I. "I don't suppose American girls are much different from English ones in instinct."

"Isn't it Théophile Gautier who says that the only difference between country and country lie in the slang and the uniform of the police?"

Now, in the name of all the gods at once, what is one to say to a young lady (who in England would be a person) who earns her own bread, and very naturally hates the employ, and slings out-of-the-way quotations at your head? That one falls in love with her goes without saying, but that is not enough.

A mission should be established.

AMERICAN SALMON

III

AMERICAN SALMON

The race is neither to the swift nor the battle to the strong; but time and chance cometh to all.

I HAVE lived!

The American Continent may now sink under the sea, for I have taken the best that it yields, and the best was neither dollars, love, nor real estate.

Hear now, gentlemen of the Punjab Fishing Club, who whip the reaches of the Tavi, and you who painfully import trout over to Octamund, and I will tell you how old man California and I went fishing, and you shall envy.

We returned from The Dalles to Portland by the way we had come, the steamer stopping *en route* to pick up a night's catch of one of the salmon wheels on the river, and to deliver it at a cannery down-stream.

When the proprietor of the wheel announced that his take was two thousand two hundred and thirty pounds weight of fish, "and not a heavy catch neither," I thought he lied. But he sent

the boxes aboard, and I counted the salmon by the hundred—huge fifty-pounders hardly dead, scores of twenty and thirty pounders, and a host of smaller fish. They were all Chenook salmon, as distinguished from the "steel head" and the "silver side." That is to say, they were royal salmon, and California and I dropped a tear over them, as monarchs who deserved a better fate; but the lust of slaughter entered into our souls, and we talked fish and forgot the mountain scenery that had so moved us a day before.

The steamer halted at a rude wooden warehouse built on piles in a lonely reach of the river, and sent in the fish. I followed them up a scale-strewn, fishy incline that led to the cannery. The crazy building was quivering with the machinery on its floors, and a glittering bank of tin scraps twenty feet high showed where the waste was thrown after the cans had been punched.

Only Chinamen were employed on the work, and they looked like blood-besmeared yellow devils as they crossed the rifts of sunlight that lay upon the floor. When our consignment arrived, the rough wooden boxes broke of themselves as they were dumped down under a jet of water, and the salmon burst out in a stream of quicksilver. A Chinaman jerked up a twenty-pounder, beheaded and detailed it with two swift strokes of a knife, flicked out its internal arrange-

ments with a third, and cast it into a blood-dyed tank. The headless fish leaped from under his hands as though they were facing a rapid. Other Chinamen pulled them from the vat and thrust them under a thing like a chaff-cutter, which, descending, hewed them into unseemly red gobbets fit for the can.

More Chinamen, with yellow, crooked fingers, jammed the stuff into the cans, which slid down some marvelous machine forthwith, soldering their own tops as they passed. Each can was hastily tested for flaws, and then sunk with a hundred companions into a vat of boiling water, there to be half cooked for a few minutes. The cans bulged slightly after the operation, and were therefore slidden along by the trolleyful to men with needles and soldering-irons who vented them and soldered the aperture. Except for the label, the "Finest Columbia Salmon" was ready for the market. I was impressed not so much with the speed of the manufacture as the character of the factory. Inside, on a floor ninety by forty, the most civilized and murderous of machinery. Outside, three footsteps, the thick-growing pines and the immense solitude of the hills. Our steamer only stayed twenty minutes at that place, but I counted two hundred and forty finished cans made from the catch of the previous night ere I left the slippery, blood-

stained, scale-spangled, oily floors and the offal-smeared Chinamen.

We reached Portland, California and I crying for salmon, and a real-estate man, to whom we had been intrusted by an insurance man, met us in the street, saying that fifteen miles away, across country, we should come upon a place called Clackamas, where we might perchance find what we desired. And California, his coat-tails flying in the wind, ran to a livery-stable and chartered a wagon and team forthwith. I could push the wagon about with one hand, so light was its structure. The team was purely American—that is to say, almost human in its intelligence and docility. Some one said that the roads were not good on the way to Clackamas, and warned us against smashing the springs. "Portland," who had watched the preparations, finally reckoned "He'd come along, too;" and under heavenly skies we three companions of a day set forth, California carefully lashing our rods into the carriage, and the by-standers overwhelming us with directions as to the saw-mills we were to pass, the ferries we were to cross, and the sign-posts we were to seek signs from. Half a mile from this city of fifty thousand souls we struck (and this must be taken literally) a plank road that would have been a disgrace to an Irish village.

Then six miles of macadamized road showed us that the team could move. A railway ran between us and the banks of the Willamette, and another above us through the mountains. All the land was dotted with small townships, and the roads were full of farmers in their town wagons, bunches of tow-haired, boggle-eyed urchins sitting in the hay behind. The men generally looked like loafers, but their women were all well dressed.

Brown braiding on a tailor-made jacket does not, however, consort with hay-wagons. Then we struck into the woods along what California called a *camina reale*—a good road—and Portland a "fair track." It wound in and out among fire-blackened stumps under pine-trees, along the corners of log fences, through hollows, which must be hopeless marsh in the winter, and up absurd gradients. But nowhere throughout its length did I see any evidence of road-making. There was a track—you couldn't well get off it, and it was all you could do to stay on it. The dust lay a foot thick in the blind ruts, and under the dust we found bits of planking and bundles of brushwood that sent the wagon bounding into the air. The journey in itself was a delight. Sometimes we crashed through bracken; anon, where the blackberries grew rankest, we found a lonely little cemetery, the wooden rails all awry

and the pitiful, stumpy head-stones nodding drunkenly at the soft green mullions. Then, with oaths and the sound of rent underwood, a yoke of mighty bulls would swing down a "skid" road, hauling a forty-foot log along a rudely made slide.

A valley full of wheat and cherry-trees succeeded, and halting at a house, we bought ten-pound weight of luscious black cherries for something less than a rupee, and got a drink of icy-cold water for nothing, while the untended team browsed sagaciously by the roadside. Once we found a wayside camp of horse-dealers lounging by a pool, ready for a sale or a swap, and once two sun-tanned youngsters shot down a hill on Indian ponies, their full creels banging from the high-pommeled saddle. They had been fishing, and were our brethren, therefore. We shouted aloud in chorus to scare a wild cat; we squabbled over the reasons that had led a snake to cross a road; we heaved bits of bark at a venturesome chipmunk, who was really the little grey squirrel of India, and had come to call on me; we lost our way, and got the wagon so beautifully fixed on a khud-bound road that we had to tie the two hind wheels to get it down.

Above all, California told tales of Nevada and Arizona, of lonely nights spent out prospecting, the slaughter of deer and the chase of men, of

woman—lovely woman—who is a firebrand in a Western city and leads to the popping of pistols, and of the sudden changes and chances of Fortune, who delights in making the miner or the lumberman a quadruplicate millionaire and in "busting" the railroad king.

That was a day to be remembered, and it had only begun when we drew rein at a tiny farmhouse on the banks of the Clackamas and sought horse feed and lodging, ere we hastened to the river that broke over a weir not a quarter of a mile away. Imagine a stream seventy yards broad divided by a pebbly island, running over seductive "riffles" and swirling into deep, quiet pools, where the good salmon goes to smoke his pipe after meals. Get such a stream amid fields of breast-high crops surrounded by hills of pines, throw in where you please quiet water, long-fenced meadows, and a hundred-foot bluff just to keep the scenery from growing too monotonous, and you will get some faint notion of the Clackamas. The weir had been erected to pen the Chenook salmon from going further upstream. We could see them, twenty or thirty pounds, by the score in the deep pools, or flying madly against the weir and foolishly skinning their noses. They were not our prey, for they would not rise at a fly, and we knew it. All the same, when one made his leap against the weir,

and landed on the foot-plank with a jar that shook the board I was standing on, I would fain have claimed him for my own capture.

Portland had no rod. He held the gaff and the whiskey. California sniffed up-stream and down-stream, across the racing water, chose his ground, and let the gaudy fly drop in the tail of a riffle. I was getting my rod together, when I heard the joyous shriek of the reel and the yells of California, and three feet of living silver leaped into the air far across the water. The forces were engaged.

The salmon tore up-stream, the tense line cutting the water like a tide-rip behind him, and the light bamboo bowed to breaking. What happened thereafter I cannot tell. California swore and prayed, and Portland shouted advice, and I did all three for what appeared to be half a day, but was in reality a little over a quarter of an hour, and sullenly our fish came home with spurts of temper, dashes head on and sarabands in the air, but home to the bank came he, and the remorseless reel gathered up the thread of his life inch by inch. We landed him in a little bay, and the spring weight in his gorgeous gills checked at eleven and one half pounds. Eleven and one half pounds of fighting salmon! We danced a war-dance on the pebbles, and California caught me round the waist in a hug

that went near to breaking my ribs, while he shouted:

"Partner! Partner! This is glory! Now you catch your fish! Twenty-four years I've waited for this!"

I went into that icy-cold river and made my cast just above the weir, and all but foul-hooked a blue-and-black water-snake with a coral mouth who coiled herself on a stone and hissed maledictions.

The next cast—ah, the pride of it, the regal splendor of it! the thrill that ran down from finger-tip to toe! Then the water boiled. He broke for the fly and got it. There remained enough sense in me to give him all he wanted when he jumped not once, but twenty times, before the up-stream flight that ran my line out to the last half-dozen turns, and I saw the nickeled reel-bar glitter under the thinning green coils. My thumb was burned deep when I strove to stopper the line.

I did not feel it till later, for my soul was out in the dancing weir, praying for him to turn ere he took my tackle away. And the prayer was heard. As I bowed back, the butt of the rod on my left hip-bone and the top joint dipping like unto a weeping willow, he turned and accepted each inch of slack that I could by any means get in as a favor from on high. There lie several

sorts of success in this world that taste well in the moment of enjoyment, but I question whether the stealthy theft of line from an able-bodied salmon who knows exactly what you are doing and why you are doing it is not sweeter than any other victory within human scope. Like California's fish, he ran at me head on, and leaped against the line, but the Lord gave me two hundred and fifty pairs of fingers in that hour. The banks and the pine-trees danced dizzily round me, but I only reeled—reeled as for life—reeled for hours, and at the end of the reeling continued to give him the butt while he sulked in a pool. California was further up the reach, and with the corner of my eye I could see him casting with long casts and much skill. Then he struck, and my fish broke for the weir in the same instant, and down the reach we came, California and I, reel answering reel even as the morning stars sing together.

The first wild enthusiasm of capture had died away. We were both at work now in deadly earnest to prevent the lines fouling, to stall off a down-stream rush for shaggy water just above the weir, and at the same time to get the fish into the shallow bay down-stream that gave the best practicable landing. Portland bid us both be of good heart, and volunteered to take the rod from my hands.

I would rather have died among the pebbles than surrender my right to play and land a salmon, weight unknown, with an eight-ounce rod. I heard California, at my ear, it seemed, gasping: "He's a fighter from Fightersville, sure!" as his fish made a fresh break across the stream. I saw Portland fall off a log fence, break the overhanging bank, and clatter down to the pebbles, all sand and landing-net, and I dropped on a log to rest for a moment. As I drew breath the weary hands slackened their hold, and I forgot to give him the butt.

A wild scutter in the water, a plunge, and a break for the head-waters of the Clackamas was my reward, and the weary toil of reeling in with one eye under the water and the other on the top joint of the rod was renewed. Worst of all, I was blocking California's path to the little landing bay aforesaid, and he had to halt and tire his prize where he was.

"The father of all the salmon!" he shouted. "For the love of Heaven, get your trout to bank, Johnny Bull!"

But I could do no more. Even the insult failed to move me. The rest of the game was with the salmon. He suffered himself to be drawn, skipping with pretended delight at getting to the haven where I would fain bring him. Yet no sooner did he feel shoal water under his ponder-

ous belly than he backed like a torpedo-boat, and the snarl of the reel told me that my labor was in vain. A dozen times, at least, this happened ere the line hinted he had given up the battle and would be towed in. He was towed. The landing-net was useless for one of his size, and I would not have him gaffed. I stepped into the shallows and heaved him out with a respectful hand under the gill, for which kindness he battered me about the legs with his tail, and I felt the strength of him and was proud. California had taken my place in the shallows, his fish hard held. I was up the bank lying full length on the sweet-scented grass and gasping in company with my first salmon caught, played and landed on an eight-ounce rod. My hands were cut and bleeding, I was dripping with sweat, spangled like a harlequin with scales, water from my waist down, nose peeled by the sun, but utterly, supremely, and consummately happy.

The beauty, the darling, the daisy, my Salmon Bahadur, weighed twelve pounds, and I had been seven-and-thirty minutes bringing him to bank! He had been lightly hooked on the angle of the right jaw, and the hook had not wearied him. That hour I sat among princes and crowned heads greater than them all. Below the bank we heard California scuffling with his salmon and swearing Spanish oaths. Portland and I assisted

at the capture, and the fish dragged the spring balance out by the roots. It was only constructed to weigh up to fifteen pounds. We stretched the three fish on the grass—the eleven and a half, the twelve and fifteen pounder—and we gave an oath that all who came after should merely be weighed and put back again.

How shall I tell the glories of that day so that you may be interested? Again and again did California and I prance down that reach to the little bay, each with a salmon in tow, and land him in the shallows. Then Portland took my rod and caught some ten-pounders, and my spoon was carried away by an unknown leviathan. Each fish, for the merits of the three that had died so gamely, was hastily hooked on the balance and flung back. Portland recorded the weight in a pocket-book, for he was a real-estate man. Each fish fought for all he was worth, and none more savagely than the smallest, a game little six-pounder. At the end of six hours we added up the list. Read it. Total: Sixteen fish; aggregate weight, one hundred and forty pounds. The score in detail runs something like this—it is only interesting to those concerned: fifteen, eleven and a half, twelve, ten, nine and three quarters, eight, and so forth; as I have said, nothing under six pounds, and three ten-pounders.

Very solemnly and thankfully we put up our rods—it was glory enough for all time—and returned weeping in each other's arms, weeping tears of pure joy, to that simple, bare-legged family in the packing-case house by the waterside.

The old farmer recollected days and nights of fierce warfare with the Indians "way back in the fifties," when every ripple of the Columbia River and her tributaries hid covert danger. God had dowered him with a queer, crooked gift of expression and a fierce anxiety for the welfare of his two little sons—tanned and reserved children, who attended school daily and spoke good English in a strange tongue.

His wife was an austere woman, who had once been kindly, and perhaps handsome.

Very many years of toil had taken the elasticity out of step and voice. She looked for nothing better than everlasting work—the chafing detail of housework—and then a grave somewhere up the hill among the blackberries and the pines. But in her grim way she sympathized with her eldest daughter, a small and silent maiden of eighteen, who had thoughts very far from the meals she tended and the pans she scoured.

We stumbled into the household at a crisis, and there was a deal of downright humanity in that same. A bad, wicked dressmaker had

promised the maiden a dress in time for a to-morrow's railway journey, and though the bare-footed Georgy, who stood in very wholesome awe of his sister, had scoured the woods on a pony in search, that dress never arrived. So, with sorrow in her heart and a hundred Sister-Anne glances up the road, she waited upon the strangers and, I doubt not, cursed them for the wants that stood between her and her need for tears. It was a genuine little tragedy. The mother, in a heavy, passionless voice, rebuked her impatience, yet sat up far into the night, bowed over a heap of sewing for the daughter's benefit.

These things I beheld in the long marigold-scented twilight and whispering night, loafing round the little house with California, who unfolded himself like a lotus to the moon, or in the little boarded bunk that was our bedroom, swapping tales with Portland and the old man.

Most of the yarns began in this way:

"Red Larry was a bull-puncher back of Lone County, Montana," or "There was a man riding the trail met a jack-rabbit sitting in a cactus," or "'Bout the time of the San Diego land boom, a woman from Monterey," etc.

You can try to piece out for yourselves what sort of stories they were.

THE YELLOWSTONE

IV

THE YELLOWSTONE

ONCE upon a time there was a carter who brought his team and a friend into the Yellowstone Park without due thought. Presently they came upon a few of the natural beauties of the place, and that carter turned his team into his friend's team, howling:

"Get out o' this, Jim. All hell's alight under our noses!"

And they called the place Hell's Half-Acre to this day to witness if the carter lied.

We, too, the old lady from Chicago, her husband, Tom, and the good little mares, came to Hell's Half-Acre, which is about sixty acres in extent, and when Tom said:

"Would you like to drive over it?"

We said:

"Certainly not, and if you do we shall report you to the park authorities."

There was a plain, blistered, peeled, and abominable, and it was given over to the sportings and spoutings of devils who threw mud, and steam, and dirt at each other with hoops, and halloos, and bellowing curses.

The places smelled of the refuse of the pit, and that odor mixed with the clean, wholesome aroma of the pines in our nostrils throughout the day.

This Yellowstone Park is laid out like Ollendorf, in exercises of progressive difficulty. Hell's Half-Acre was a prelude to ten or twelve miles of geyser formation.

We passed hot streams boiling in the forest; saw whiffs of steam beyond these, and yet other whiffs breaking through the misty green hills in the far distance; we trampled on sulphur in crystals, and sniffed things much worse than any sulphur which is known to the upper world; and so journeying, bewildered with the novelty, came upon a really park-like place where Tom suggested we should get out and play with the geysers on foot.

Imagine mighty green fields splattered with lime-beds, all the flowers of the summer growing up to the very edge of the lime. That was our first glimpse of the geyser basins.

The buggy had pulled up close to a rough, broken, blistered cone of spelter stuff between ten and twenty feet high. There was trouble in that place—moaning, splashing, gurgling, and the clank of machinery. A spurt of boiling water jumped into the air, and a wash of water followed.

I removed swiftly. The old lady from Chicago shrieked. "What a wicked waste!" said her husband.

I think they call it the Riverside Geyser. Its spout was torn and ragged like the mouth of a gun when a shell has burst there. It grumbled madly for a moment or two, and then was still. I crept over the steaming lime—it was the burning marl on which Satan lay—and looked fearfully down its mouth. You should never look a gift geyser in the mouth.

I beheld a horrible, slippery, slimy funnel with water rising and falling ten feet at a time. Then the water rose to lip level with a rush, and an infernal bubbling troubled this Devil's Bethesda before the sullen heave of the crest of a wave lapped over the edge and made me run.

Mark the nature of the human soul! I had begun with awe, not to say terror, for this was my first experience of such things. I stepped back from the banks of the Riverside Geyser, saying:

"Pooh! Is that all it can do?"

Yet for aught I knew, the whole thing might have blown up at a minute's notice, she, he, or it being an arrangement of uncertain temper.

We drifted on, up that miraculous valley. On either side of us were hills from a thousand or fifteen hundred feet high, wooded from crest to heel. As far as the eye could range forward

were columns of steam in the air, misshapen lumps of lime, mist-like preadamite monsters, still pools of turquoise-blue stretches of blue corn-flowers, a river that coiled on itself twenty times, pointed bowlders of strange colors, and ridges of glaring, staring white.

A moon-faced trooper of German extraction—never was park so carefully patrolled—came up to inform us that as yet we had not seen any of the real geysers; that they were all a mile or so up the valley, and tastefully scattered round the hotel in which we would rest for the night.

America is a free country, but the citizens look down on the soldier. I had to entertain that trooper. The old lady from Chicago would have none of him; so we loafed alone together, now across half-rotten pine logs sunk in swampy ground, anon over the ringing geyser formation, then pounding through river-sand or brushing knee-deep through long grass.

"And why did you enlist?" said I.

The moon-faced one's face began to work. I thought he would have a fit, but he told me a story instead—such a nice tale of a naughty little girl who wrote pretty love letters to two men at once. She was a simple village wife, but a wicked "family novelette" countess couldn't have accomplished her ends better. She drove one man nearly wild with the pretty little treachery,

and the other man abandoned her and came West to forget the trickery.

Moon-face was that man.

We rounded and limped over a low spur of hill, and came out upon a field of aching, snowy lime rolled in sheets, twisted into knots, riven with rents, and diamonds, and stars, stretching for more than half a mile in every direction.

On this place of despair lay most of the big, bad geysers who know when there is trouble in Krakatoa, who tell the pines when there is a cyclone on the Atlantic seaboard, and who are exhibited to visitors under pretty and fanciful names.

The first mound that I encountered belonged to a goblin who was splashing in his tub.

I heard him kick, pull a shower-bath on his shoulders, gasp, crack his joints, and rub himself down with a towel; then he let the water out of the bath, as a thoughtful man should, and it all sunk down out of sight till another goblin arrived.

So we looked and we wondered at the Beehive, whose mouth is built up exactly like a hive, at the Turban (which is not in the least like a turban), and at many, many other geysers, hot holes, and springs. Some of them rumbled, some hissed, some went off spasmodically, and others lay dead still in sheets of sapphire and beryl.

Would you believe that even these terrible creatures have to be guarded by the troopers to prevent the irreverent Americans from chipping the cones to pieces, or, worse still, making the geyser sick? If you take a small barrel full of soft soap and drop it down a geyser's mouth, that geyser will presently be forced to lay all before you, and for days afterward will be of an irritated and inconstant stomach.

When they told me the tale I was filled with sympathy. Now I wish that I had soft-soap and tried the experiment on some lonely little beast far away in the woods. It sounds so probable and so human.

Yet he would be a bold man who would administer emetics to the Giantess. She is flat-lipped, having no mouth; she looks like a pool, fifty feet long and thirty wide, and there is no ornamentation about her. At irregular intervals she speaks and sends up a volume of water over two hundred feet high to begin with, then she is angry for a day and a half—sometimes for two days.

Owing to her peculiarity of going mad in the night, not many people have seen the Giantess at her finest; but the clamor of her unrest, men say, shakes the wooden hotel, and echoes like thunder among the hills.

The congregation returned to the hotel to put

down their impressions in diaries and note-books, which they wrote up ostentatiously in the verandas. It was a sweltering hot day, albeit we stood somewhat higher than the level of Simla, and I left that raw pine creaking caravansary for the cool shade of a clump of pines between whose trunks glimmered tents.

A batch of United States troopers came down the road and flung themselves across the country into their rough lines. The Melican cavalryman can ride, though he keeps his accoutrements pig-fashion and his horse cow-fashion.

I was free of that camp in five minutes—free to play with the heavy, lumpy carbines, have the saddles stripped, and punch the horses knowingly in the ribs. One of the men had been in the fight with "Wrap-up-his-Tail," and he told me how that great chief, his horse's tail tied up in red calico, swaggered in front of the United States cavalry, challenging all to single combat. But he was slain, and a few of his tribe with him.

"There's no use in an Indian, anyway," concluded my friend.

A couple of cowboys—real cowboys—jingled through the camp amid a shower of mild chaff. They were on their way to Cook City, I fancy, and I know that they never washed. But they were picturesque ruffians exceedingly, with long spurs, hooded stirrups, slouch hats, fur weather-

cloth over their knees, and pistol-butts just easy to hand.

"The cowboy's goin' under before long," said my friend. "Soon as the country's settled up he'll have to go. But he's mighty useful now. What would we do without the cowboy?"

"As how?" said I, and the camp laughed.

"He has the money. We have the skill. He comes in winter to play poker at the military posts. We play poker—a few. When he's lost his money we make him drunk and let him go. Sometimes we get the wrong man."

And he told me a tale of an innocent cowboy who turned up, cleaned out, at an army post, and played poker for thirty-six hours. But it was the post that was cleaned out when that long-haired Caucasian removed himself, heavy with everybody's pay and declining the proffered liquor.

"Noaw," said the historian, "I don't play with no cowboy unless he's a little bit drunk first."

Ere I departed I gathered from more than one man the significant fact that up to one hundred yards he felt absolutely secure behind his revolver.

"In England, I understand," quoth the limber youth from the South,—"in England a man isn't allowed to play with no firearms. He's got to be taught all that when he enlists. I didn't want much teaching how to shoot straight 'fore I

served Uncle Sam. And that's just where it is. But you was talking about your Horse Guards now?"

I explained briefly some peculiarities of equipment connected with our crackest crack cavalry. I grieve to say the camp roared.

"Take 'em over swampy ground. Let 'em run around a bit an' work the starch out of 'em, an' then, Almighty, if we wouldn't plug 'em at ease I'd eat their horses."

There was a maiden—a very little maiden—who had just stepped out of one of James's novels. She owned a delightful mother and an equally delightful father—a heavy-eyed, slow-voiced man of finance. The parents thought that their daughter wanted change.

She lived in New Hampshire. Accordingly, she had dragged them up to Alaska and to the Yosemite Valley, and was now returning leisurely, via the Yellowstone, just in time for the tail-end of the summer season at Saratoga.

We had met once or twice before in the park, and I had been amazed and amused at her critical commendation of the wonders that she saw. From that very resolute little mouth I received a lecture on American literature, the nature and inwardness of Washington society, the precise value of Cable's works as compared with Uncle Remus Harris, and a few other things that had nothing

whatever to do with geysers, but were altogether pleasant.

Now, an English maiden who had stumbled on a dust-grimed, lime-washed, sun-peeled, collarless wanderer come from and going to goodness knows where, would, her mother inciting her and her father brandishing his umbrella, have regarded him as a dissolute adventurer—a person to be disregarded.

Not so those delightful people from New Hampshire. They were good enough to treat him—it sounds almost incredible—as a human being, possibly respectable, probably not in immediate need of financial assistance.

Papa talked pleasantly and to the point.

The little maiden strove valiantly with the accent of her birth and that of her rearing, and mamma smiled benignly in the background.

Balance this with a story of a young English idiot I met mooning about inside his high collar, attended by a valet. He condescended to tell me that "you can't be too careful who you talk to in these parts." And stalked on, fearing, I suppose, every minute for his social chastity.

That man was a barbarian (I took occasion to tell him so), for he comported himself after the manner of the head-hunters and hunted of Assam who are at perpetual feud one with another.

You will understand that these foolish stories

are introduced in order to cover the fact that this pen cannot describe the glories of the Upper Geyser Basin. The evening I spent under the lee of the Castle Geyser, sitting on a log with some troopers and watching a baronial keep forty feet high spouting hot water. If the Castle went off first, they said the Giantess would be quiet, and *vice versâ*, and then they told tales till the moon got up and a party of campers in the woods gave us all something to eat.

Then came soft, turfy forest that deadened the wheels, and two troopers on detachment duty stole noiselessly behind us. One was the Wrap-up-his-Tail man, and they talked merrily while the half-broken horses bucked about among the trees. And so a cavalry escort was with us for a mile, till we got to a mighty hill all strewn with moss agates, and everybody had to jump out and pant in that thin air. But how intoxicating it was! The old lady from Chicago ducked like an emancipated hen as she scuttled about the road, cramming pieces of rock into her reticule. She sent me fifty yards down to the hillside to pick up a piece of broken bottle which she insisted was moss agate.

"I've some o' that at home, an' they shine. Yes, you go get it, young man."

As we climbed the long path the road grew viler and viler till it became, without disguise, the

bed of a torrent; and just when things were at their rockiest we nearly fell into a little sapphire lake—but never sapphire was so blue—called Mary's Lake; and that between eight and nine thousand feet above the sea.

Afterward, grass downs, all on a vehement slope, so that the buggy, following the new-made road, ran on the two off-wheels mostly till we dipped head-first into a ford, climbed up a cliff, raced along down, dipped again, and pulled up disheveled at "Larry's" for lunch and an hour's rest.

Then we lay on the grass and laughed with sheer bliss of being alive. This have I known once in Japan, once on the banks of the Columbia, what time the salmon came in and California howled, and once again in the Yellowstone by the light of the eyes of the maiden from New Hampshire. Four little pools lay at my elbow, one was of black water (tepid), one clear water (cold), one clear water (hot), one red water (boiling). My newly washed handkerchief covered them all, and we two marveled as children marvel.

"This evening we shall do the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone," said the maiden.

"Together?" said I; and she said, "Yes."

The sun was beginning to sink when we heard the roar of falling waters and came to a broad river along whose banks we ran. And then—I

might at a pinch describe the infernal regions, but not the other place. The Yellowstone River has occasion to run through a gorge about eight miles long. To get to the bottom of the gorge it makes two leaps, one of about one hundred and twenty and the other of three hundred feet. I investigated the upper or lesser fall, which is close to the hotel.

Up to that time nothing particular happens to the Yellowstone—its banks being only rocky, rather steep, and plentifully adorned with pines.

At the falls it comes round a corner, green, solid, ribbed with a little foam, and not more than thirty yards wide. Then it goes over, still green, and rather more solid than before. After a minute or two, you, sitting upon a rock directly above the drop, begin to understand that something has occurred; that the river has jumped between solid cliff walls, and that the gentle froth of water lapping the sides of the gorge below is really the outcome of great waves.

And the river yells aloud; but the cliffs do not allow the yells to escape.

That inspection began with curiosity and finished in terror, for it seemed that the whole world was sliding in chrysolite from under my feet. I followed with the others round the corner to arrive at the brink of the canyon. We had to climb up a nearly perpendicular ascent to begin

with, for the ground rises more than the river drops. Stately pine woods fringe either lip of the gorge, which is the gorge of the Yellowstone. You'll find all about it in the guide books.

All that I can say is that without warning or preparation I looked into a gulf seventeen hundred feet deep, with eagles and fish-hawks circling far below. And the sides of that gulf were one wild welter of color—crimson, emerald, cobalt, ochre, amber, honey splashed with port wine, snow white, vermilion, lemon, and silver grey in wide washes. The sides did not fall sheer, but were graven by time, and water, and air into monstrous head of kings, dead chiefs—men and women of the old time. So far below that no sound of its strife could reach us, the Yellowstone River ran a finger-wide strip of jade green.

The sunlight took those wondrous walls and gave fresh hues to those that nature had already laid there.

Evening crept through the pines that shadowed us, but the full glory of the day flamed in that canyon as we went out very cautiously to a jutting piece of rock—blood-red or pink it was—that overhung the deepest deeps of all.

Now I know what it is to sit enthroned amid the clouds of sunset as the spirits sit in Blake's

pictures. Giddiness took away all sensation of touch or form, but the sense of blinding color remained.

When I reached the mainland again I had sworn that I had been floating.

The maid from New Hampshire said no word for a very long time. Then she quoted poetry, which was perhaps the best thing she could have done.

"And to think that this show-place has been going on all these days an' none of we ever saw it," said the old lady from Chicago, with an acid glance at her husband.

"No, only the Injians," said he, unmoved; and the maiden and I laughed.

Inspiration is fleeting, beauty is vain, and the power of the mind for wonder limited. Though the shining hosts themselves had risen choiring from the bottom of the gorge, they would not have prevented her papa and one baser than he from rolling stones down those stupendous rainbow-washed slides. Seventeen hundred feet of steepest pitch and rather more than seventeen hundred colors for log or bowlder to whirl through!

So we heaved things and saw them gather way and bound from white rock to red or yellow, dragging behind them torrents of color, till the noise of their descent ceased and they bounded a

hundred yards clear at the last into the Yellowstone.

"I've been down there," said Tom, that evening. "It's easy to get down if you're careful—just sit an' slide; but getting up is worse. An' I found down below there two stones just marked with a picture of the canyon. I wouldn't sell these rocks not for fifteen dollars."

And papa and I crawled down to the Yellowstone—just above the first little fall—to wet a line for good luck. The round moon came up and turned the cliffs and pines into silver; and a two-pound trout came up also, and we slew him among the rocks, nearly tumbling into that wild river.

* * * * * *

Then out and away to Livingstone once more. The maiden from New Hampshire disappeared, papa and mamma with her. Disappeared, too, the old lady from Chicago, and the others.

CHICAGO

V

CHICAGO

"I know thy cunning and thy greed,
Thy hard high lust and wilful deed,
And all thy glory loves to tell
Of specious gifts material."

I HAVE struck a city—a real city—and they call it Chicago.

The other places do not count. San Francisco was a pleasure-resort as well as a city, and Salt Lake was a phenomenon.

This place is the first American city I have encountered. It holds rather more than a million of people with bodies, and stands on the same sort of soil as Calcutta. Having seen it, I urgently desire never to see it again. It is inhabited by savages. Its water is the water of the Hooghly, and its air is dirt. Also it says that it is the "boss" town of America.

I do not believe that it has anything to do with this country. They told me to go to the Palmer House, which is overmuch gilded and mirrored, and there I found a huge hall of tessellated marble crammed with people talking about money, and spitting about everywhere. Other barbarians

charged in and out of this inferno with letters and telegrams in their hands, and yet others shouted at each other. A man who had drunk quite as much as was good for him told me that this was "the finest hotel in the finest city on God Almighty's earth." By the way, when an American wishes to indicate the next country or state, he says, "God A'mighty's earth." This prevents discussion and flatters his vanity.

Then I went out into the streets, which are long and flat and without end. And verily it is not a good thing to live in the East for any length of time. Your ideas grow to clash with those held by every right-thinking man. I looked down interminable vistas flanked with nine, ten, and fifteen-storied houses, and crowded with men and women, and the show impressed me with a great horror.

Except in London—and I have forgotten what London was like—I had never seen so many white people together, and never such a collection of miserables. There was no color in the street and no beauty—only a maze of wire ropes overhead and dirty stone flagging under foot.

A cab-driver volunteered to show me the glory of the town for so much an hour, and with him I wandered far. He conceived that all this turmoil and squash was a thing to be reverently admired, that it was good to huddle men together

in fifteen layers, one atop of the other, and to dig holes in the ground for offices.

He said that Chicago was a live town, and that all the creatures hurrying by me were engaged in business. That is to say they were trying to make some money that they might not die through lack of food to put into their bellies. He took me to canals as black as ink, and filled with untold abominations, and bid me watch the stream of traffic across the bridges.

He then took me into a saloon, and while I drank made me note that the floor was covered with coins sunk in cement. A Hottentot would not have been guilty of this sort of barbarism. The coins made an effect pretty enough, but the man who put them there had no thought of beauty, and, therefore, he was a savage.

Then my cab-driver showed me business blocks gay with signs and studded with fantastic and absurd advertisements of goods, and looking down the long street so adorned, it was as though each vender stood at his door, howling:

"For the sake of money, employ or buy of me, and me only!"

Have you ever seen a crowd at a famine-relief distribution? You know then how the men leap into the air, stretching out their arms above the crowd in the hope of being seen, while the women dolorously slap the stomachs of their

children and whimper. I had sooner watch famine relief than the white man engaged in what he calls legitimate competition. The one I understand. The other makes me ill.

And the cabman said that these things were the proof of progress, and by that I knew he had been reading his newspaper, as every intelligent American should. The papers tell their *clientèle* in language fitted to their comprehension that the snarling together of telegraph-wires, the heaving up of houses, and the making of money is progress.

I spent ten hours in that huge wilderness, wandering through scores of miles of these terrible streets and jostling some few hundred thousand of these terrible people who talked *paisa bat* through their noses.

The cabman left me; but after awhile I picked up another man, who was full of figures, and into my ears he poured them as occasion required or the big blank factories suggested. Here they turned out so many hundred thousand dollars' worth of such and such an article; there so many million other things; this house was worth so many million dollars; that one so many million, more or less. It was like listening to a child babbling of its hoard of shells. It was like watching a fool playing with buttons. But I was expected to do more than listen or watch. He

demanded that I should admire; and the utmost that I could say was:

"Are these things so? Then I am very sorry for you."

That made him angry, and he said that insular envy made me unresponsive. So, you see, I could not make him understand.

About four-and-a-half hours after Adam was turned out of the Garden of Eden he felt hungry, and so, bidding Eve take care that her head was not broken by the descending fruit, shinned up a cocoanut-palm. That hurt his legs, cut his breast, and made him breathe heavily, and Eve was tormented with fear lest her lord should miss his footing, and so bring the tragedy of this world to an end ere the curtain had fairly risen. Had I met Adam then, I should have been sorry for him. To-day I find eleven hundred thousand of his sons just as far advanced as their father in the art of getting food, and immeasurably inferior to him in that they think that their palm-trees lead straight to the skies. Consequently, I am sorry in rather more than a million different ways.

In the East bread comes naturally, even to the poorest, by a little scratching or the gift of a friend not quite so poor. In less favored countries one is apt to forget. Then I went to bed. And that was on a Saturday night.

Sunday brought me the queerest experiences of

all—a revelation of barbarism complete. I found a place that was officially described as a church. It was a circus really, but that the worshippers did not know. There were flowers all about the building, which was fitted up with plush and stained oak and much luxury, including twisted brass candlesticks of severest Gothic design.

To these things and a congregation of savages entered suddenly a wonderful man, completely in the confidence of their God, whom he treated colloquially and exploited very much as a newspaper reporter would exploit a foreign potentate. But, unlike the newspaper reporter, he never allowed his listeners to forget that he, and not He, was the centre of attraction. With a voice of silver and with imagery borrowed from the auction-room, he built up for his hearers a heaven on the lines of the Palmer House (but with all the gilding real gold, and all the plate-glass diamond), and set in the centre of it a loud-voiced, argumentative, very shrewd creation that he called God. One sentence at this point caught my delighted ear. It was apropos of some question of the Judgment, and ran:

"No! I tell you God doesn't do business that way."

He was giving them a deity whom they could comprehend, and a gold and jeweled heaven in which they could take a natural interest. He in-

terlarded his performance with the slang of the streets, the counter, and the exchange, and he said that religion ought to enter into daily life. Consequently, I presume he introduced it as daily life—his own and the life of his friends.

Then I escaped before the blessing, desiring no benediction at such hands. But the persons who listened seemed to enjoy themselves, and I understood that I had met with a popular preacher.

Later on, when I had perused the sermons of a gentleman called Talmage and some others, I perceived that I had been listening to a very mild specimen. Yet that man, with his brutal gold and silver idols, his hands-in-pocket, cigar-in-mouth, and hat-on-the-back-of-the-head style of dealing with the sacred vessels, would count himself, spiritually, quite competent to send a mission to convert the Indians.

All that Sunday I listened to people who said that the mere fact of spiking down strips of iron to wood, and getting a steam and iron thing to run along them was progress, that the telephone was progress, and the net-work of wires overhead was progress. They repeated their statements again and again.

One of them took me to their City Hall and Board of Trade works, and pointed it out with pride. It was very ugly, but very big, and the streets in front of it were narrow and unclean.

When I saw the faces of the men who did business in that building, I felt that there had been a mistake in their billeting.

By the way, 'tis a consolation to feel that I am not writing to an English audience. Then I should have to fall into feigned ecstasies over the marvelous progress of Chicago since the days of the great fire, to allude casually to the raising of the entire city so many feet above the level of the lake which it faces, and generally to grovel before the golden calf. But you, who are desperately poor, and therefore by these standards of no account, know things, will understand when I write that they have managed to get a million of men together on flat land, and that the bulk of these men together appear to be lower than Mahajans and not so companionable as a Punjabi Jat after harvest.

But I don't think it was the blind hurry of the people, their *argot*, and their grand ignorance of things beyond their immediate interests that displeased me so much as a study of the daily papers of Chicago.

Imprimis, there was some sort of a dispute between New York and Chicago as to which town should give an exhibition of products to be hereafter holden, and through the medium of their more dignified journals the two cities were yahooing and hi-yi-ing at each other like opposi-

tion newsboys. They called it humor, but it sounded like something quite different.

That was only the first trouble. The second lay in the tone of the productions. Leading articles which include gems such as "Back of such and such a place," or, "We noticed, Tuesday, such an event," or, "don't" for "does not," are things to be accepted with thankfulness. All that made me want to cry was that in these papers were faithfully reproduced all the war-cries and "back-talk" of the Palmer House bar, the slang of the barber-shops, the mental elevation and integrity of the Pullman car porter, the dignity of the dime museum, and the accuracy of the excited fish-wife. I am sternly forbidden to believe that the paper educates the public. Then I am compelled to believe that the public educate the paper; yet suicides on the press are rare.

Just when the sense of unreality and oppression was strongest upon me, and when I most wanted help, a man sat at my side and began to talk what he called politics.

I had chanced to pay about six shillings for a traveling-cap worth eighteen-pence, and he made of the fact a text for a sermon. He said that this was a rich country, and that the people liked to pay two hundred per cent. on the value of a thing. They could afford it. He said that the govern-

ment imposed a protective duty of from ten to seventy per cent. on foreign-made articles, and that the American manufacturer consequently could sell his goods for a healthy sum. Thus an imported hat would, with duty, cost two guineas. The American manufacturer would make a hat for seventeen shillings, and sell it for one pound fifteen. In these things, he said, lay the greatness of America and the effeteness of England. Competition between factory and factory kept the prices down to decent limits, but I was never to forget that this people were a rich people, not like the pauper Continentals, and that they enjoyed paying duties.

To my weak intellect this seemed rather like juggling with counters. Everything that I have yet purchased costs about twice as much as it would in England, and when native made is of inferior quality.

Moreover, since these lines were first thought of, I have visited a gentleman who owned a factory which used to produce things. He owned the factory still. Not a man was in it, but he was drawing a handsome income from a syndicate of firms for keeping it closed, in order that it might not produce things. This man said that if protection were abandoned, a tide of pauper labor would flood the country, and as I looked at his factory I thought how entirely better it was to

have no labor of any kind whatever rather than face so horrible a future.

Meantime, do you remember that this peculiar country enjoys paying money for value not received? I am an alien, and for the life of me I cannot see why six shillings should be paid for eighteen-penny caps, or eight shillings for half-crown cigar-cases. When the country fills up to a decently populated level a few million people who are not aliens will be smitten with the same sort of blindness.

But my friend's assertion somehow thoroughly suited the grotesque ferocity of Chicago.

See now and judge! In the village of Isser Jang, on the road to Montgomery, there be four Changar women who winnow corn—some seventy bushels a year. Beyond their hut lives Purun Dass, the money-lender, who on good security lends as much as five thousand rupees in a year. Jowala Singh, the smith, mends the village plows—some thirty, broken at the share, in three hundred and sixty-five days; and Hukm Chund, who is letter-writer and head of the little club under the travelers' tree, generally keeps the village posted in such gossip as the barber and the midwife have not yet made public property.

Chicago husks and winnows her wheat by the million bushels, a hundred banks lend hundreds of millions of dollars in the year, and scores of

factories turn out plow-gear and machinery by steam. Scores of daily papers do work which Hukm Chund and the barber and the midwife perform, with due regard for public opinion, in the village of Isser Jang. So far as manufactories go, the difference between Chicago on the lake, and Isser Jang on the Montgomery road, is one of degree only, and not of kind. As far as the understanding of the uses of life goes, Isser Jang, for all its seasonal cholers, has the advantage over Chicago.

Jowala Singh knows and takes care to avoid the three or four ghoul-haunted fields on the outskirts of the village; but he is not urged by millions of devils to run about all day in the sun and swear that his plowshares are the best in the Punjab; nor does Purun Dass fly forth in an ekka more than once or twice a year, and he knows, on a pinch, how to use the railway and the telegraph as well as any son of Israel in Chicago. But this is absurd.

The East is not the West, and these men must continue to deal with the machinery of life, and to call it progress. Their very preachers dare not rebuke them. They gloss over the hunting for money and the thrice-sharpened bitterness of Adam's curse, by saying that such things dower a man with a larger range of thoughts and higher aspirations. They do not say, "Free yourselves

from your own slavery," but rather, "If you can possibly manage it, do not set quite so much store on the things of this world."

And they do not know what the things of this world are!

I went off to see cattle killed, by way of clearing my head, which, as you will perceive, was getting muddled. They say every Englishman goes to the Chicago stock-yards. You shall find them about six miles from the city; and once having seen them, you will never forget the sight.

As far as the eye can reach stretches a township of cattle-pens, cunningly divided into blocks, so that the animals of any pen can be speedily driven out close to an inclined timber path which leads to an elevated covered way straddling high above the pens. These viaducts are two-storied. On the upper story tramp the doomed cattle, stolidly for the most part. On the lower, with a scuffling of sharp hoofs and multitudinous yells, run the pigs, the same end being appointed for each. Thus you will see the gangs of cattle waiting their turn—as they wait sometimes for days; and they need not be distressed by the sight of their fellows running about in the fear of death. All they know is that a man on horseback causes their next-door neighbors to move by means of a whip. Certain bars and fences are

unshipped, and behold! that crowd have gone up the mouth of a sloping tunnel and return no more.

It is different with the pigs. They shriek back the news of the exodus to their friends, and a hundred pens skirl responsive.

It was to the pigs I first addressed myself. Selecting a viaduct which was full of them, as I could hear, though I could not see, I marked a sombre building whereto it ran, and went there, not unalarmed by stray cattle who had managed to escape from their proper quarters. A pleasant smell of brine warned me of what was coming. I entered the factory and found it full of pork in barrels, and on another story more pork unbarrelled, and in a huge room the halves of swine, for whose behoof great lumps of ice were being pitched in at the window. That room was the mortuary chamber where the pigs lay for a little while in state ere they began their progress through such passages as kings may sometimes travel.

Turning a corner, and not noting an overhead arrangement of greased rail, wheel, and pulley, I ran into the arms of four eviscerated carcasses, all pure white and of a human aspect, pushed by a man clad in vehement red. When I leaped aside, the floor was slippery under me. Also there was a flavor of farm-yard in my nostrils

and the shouting of a multitude in my ears. But there was no joy in that shouting. Twelve men stood in two lines, six a side. Between them and overhead ran the railway of death that had nearly shunted me through the window. Each man carried a knife, the sleeves of his shirt were cut off at the elbows, and from bosom to heel he was blood-red.

Beyond this perspective was a column of steam, and beyond that was where I worked my awe-struck way, unwilling to touch beam or wall. The atmosphere was stifling as a night in the rains by reason of the steam and the crowd. I climbed to the beginning of things and, perched upon a narrow beam, overlooked very nearly all the pigs ever bred in Wisconsin. They had just been shot out of the mouth of the viaduct and huddled together in a large pen. Thence they were flicked persuasively, a few at a time, into a smaller chamber, and there a man fixed tackle on their hinder legs, so that they rose in the air, suspended from the railway of death.

Oh! it was then they shrieked and called on their mothers, and made promises of amendment, till the tackle-man punted them in their backs and they slid head down into a brick-floored passage, very like a big kitchen sink, that was blood-red. There awaited them a red man with a knife, which he passed jauntily through

their throats, and the full-voiced shriek became a splutter, and then a fall as of heavy tropical rain, and the red man, who was backed against the passage-wall, you will understand, stood clear of the wildly kicking hoofs and passed his hand over his eyes, not from any feeling of compassion, but because the spurted blood was in his eyes, and he had barely time to stick the next arrival. Then that first stuck swine dropped, still kicking, into a great vat of boiling water, and spoke no more words, but wallowed in obedience to some unseen machinery, and presently came forth at the lower end of the vat, and was heaved on the blades of a blunt paddle-wheel, things which said "Hough, hough, hough!" and skelped all the hair off him, except what little a couple of men with knives could remove.

Then he was again hitched by the heels to that said railway, and passed down the line of the twelve men, each man with a knife—losing with each man a certain amount of his individuality, which was taken away in a wheelbarrow, and when he reached the last man he was very beautiful to behold, but excessively unstuffed and limp. Preponderance of individuality was ever a bar to foreign travel. That pig could have been in case to visit you in India had he not parted with some of his most cherished notions.

The dissecting part impressed me not so much

as the slaying. They were so excessively alive, these pigs. And then, they were so excessively dead, and the man in the dripping, clammy, hot passage did not seem to care, and ere the blood of such a one had ceased to foam on the floor, such another and four friends with him had shrieked and died. But a pig is only the unclean animal—the forbidden of the prophet.

THE AMERICAN ARMY

VI

THE AMERICAN ARMY

I SHOULD very much like to deliver a dissertation on the American army and the possibilities of its extension. You see, it is such a beautiful little army, and the dear people don't quite understand what to do with it. The theory is that it is an instructional nucleus round which the militia of the country will rally, and from which they will get a stiffening in time of danger. Yet other people consider that the army should be built, like a pair of lazy tongs—on the principle of elasticity and extension—so that in time of need it may fill up its skeleton battalions and empty saddle troops. This is real wisdom, because the American army, as at present constituted, is made up of:

Twenty-five regiments infantry, ten companies each.

Ten regiments cavalry, twelve companies each.

Five regiments artillery, twelve companies each.

Now there is a notion in the air to reorganize the service on these lines:

Eighteen regiments infantry at four battalions,

four companies each; third battalion, skeleton; fourth on paper.

Eight regiments cavalry at four battalions, four troops each; third battalion, skeleton; fourth on paper.

Five regiments artillery at four battalions, four companies each; third battalion, skeleton; fourth on paper.

Observe the beauty of this business. The third battalion will have its officers, but no men; the fourth will probably have a rendezvous and some equipment.

It is not contemplated to give it anything more definite at present. Assuming the regiments to be made up to full complement, we get an army of fifty thousand men, which after the need passes away must be cut down fifty per cent. to the huge delight of the officers.

The military needs of the States be three: (a) Frontier warfare, an employment well within the grip of the present army of twenty-five thousand, and in the nature of things growing less arduous year by year; (b) internal riots and commotions which rise up like a dust devil, whirl furiously, and die out long before the authorities at Washington could begin to fill up even the third skeleton battalions, much less hunt about for material for the fourth; (c) civil war, in which, as the case in the affair of the North and South, the

regular army would be swamped in the mass of militia and armed volunteers that would turn the land into a hell.

Yet the authorities persist in regarding an external war as a thing to be seriously considered.

The Power that would disembark troops on American soil would be capable of heaving a shovelful of mud into the Atlantic in the hope of filling it up. Consequently, the authorities are fascinated with the idea of the sliding scale or concertina army. This is an hereditary instinct, for you know that when we English have got together two companies, one machine gun, a sick bullock, forty generals, and a mass of W. O. forms, we say we possess "an army corps capable of indefinite extension."

The American army is a beautiful little army. Some day, when all the Indians are happily dead or drunk, it ought to make the finest scientific and survey corps that the world has ever seen; it does excellent work now, but there is this defect in its nature: It is officered, as you know, from West Point.

The mischief of it is that West Point seems to be created for the purpose of spreading a general knowledge of military matters among the people. A boy goes up to that institution, gets his pass, and returns to civil life, so they tell me, with a dangerous knowledge that he is a suck-

ling Von Moltke, and may apply his learning when occasion offers. Given trouble, that man will be a nuisance, because he is a hideously versatile American, to begin with, as cock-sure of himself as a man can be, and with all the racial disregard for human life to back him, through any demi-semi-professional generalship.

In a country where, as the records of the daily papers show, men engaged in a conflict with police or jails are all too ready to adopt a military formation and get heavily shot in a sort of cheap, half-constructed warfare, instead of being decently scared by the appearance of the military, this sort of arrangement does not seem wise.

The bond between the States is of an amazing tenuity. So long as they do not absolutely march into the District of Columbia, sit on the Washington statues, and invent a flag of their own, they can legislate, lynch, hunt negroes through swamps, divorce, railroad, and rampage as much as ever they choose. They do not need knowledge of their own military strength to back their genial lawlessness.

That regular army, which is a dear little army, should be kept to itself, blooded on detachment duty, turned into the paths of science, and now and again assembled at feasts of Free Masons, and so forth.

It is too tiny to be a political power. The im-

mortal wreck of the Grand Army of the Republic is a political power of the largest and most unblushing description. It ought not to help to lay the foundations of an amateur military power that is blind and irresponsible.

By great good luck the evil-minded train, already delayed twelve hours by a burned bridge, brought me to the city on a Saturday by way of that valley which the Mormons, over their efforts, had caused to blossom like the rose. Twelve hours previously I had entered into a new world where, in conversation, every one was either a Mormon or a Gentile. It is not seemly for a free and independent citizen to dub himself a Gentile, but the Mayor of Ogden—which is the Gentile city of the valley—told me that there must be some distinction between the two flocks.

Long before the fruit orchards of Logan or the shining levels of the Salt Lake had been reached, that mayor—himself a Gentile, and one renowned for his dealings with the Mormons—told me that the great question of the existence of the power within the power was being gradually solved by the ballot and by education.

All the beauty of the valley could not make me forget it. And the valley is very fair. Bench after bench of land, flat as a table against the flanks of the ringing hills, marks where the Salt Lake rested for awhile in its collapse from an

inland sea to a lake fifty miles long and thirty broad.

There are the makings of a very fine creed about Mormonism. To begin with, the Church is rather more absolute than that of Rome. Drop the polygamy plank in the platform, but on the other hand deal lightly with certain forms of excess; keep the quality of the recruit down to the low mental level, and see that the best of all the agricultural science available is in the hands of the elders, and there you have a first-class engine for pioneer work. The tawdry mysticism and the borrowing from Freemasonry serve the low caste Swede and Dane, the Welshman and the Cornish cotter, just as well as a highly organized heaven.

Then I went about the streets and peeped into people's front windows, and the decorations upon the tables were after the manner of the year 1850. Main Street was full of country folk from the desert, come in to trade with the Zion Mercantile Coöperative Institute. The Church, I fancy, looks after the finances of this thing, and it consequently pays good dividends.

The faces of the women were not lovely. Indeed, but for the certainty that ugly persons are just as irrational in the matter of undivided love as the beautiful, it seems that polygamy was a blessed institution for the women, and that only

the dread threats of the spiritual power could drive the hulking, board-faced men into it. The women wore hideous garments, and the men appeared to be tied up with strings.

They would market all that afternoon, and on Sunday go to the praying-place. I tried to talk to a few of them, but they spoke strange tongues, and stared and behaved like cows. Yet one woman, and not an altogether ugly one, confided to me that she hated the idea of Salt Lake City being turned into a show-place for the amusement of the Gentiles.

"If we 'ave our own institutions, that ain't no reason why people should come 'ere and stare at us, his it?"

The dropped "h" betrayed her.

"And when did you leave England?" I said.

"Summer of '84. I am Dorset," she said. "The Mormon agent was very good to us, and we was very poor. Now we're better off—my father, an' mother, an' me."

"Then you like the State?"

She misunderstood at first.

"Oh, I ain't livin' in the state of polygamy. Not me, yet. I ain't married. I like where I am. I 've got things o' my own—and some land."

"But I suppose you will"—

"Not me. I ain't like them Swedes an' Danes. I ain't got nothin' to say for or against polyg-

amy. It's the elders' business, an' between you an' me, I don't think it's going on much longer. You'll 'ear them in the 'ouse to-morrer talkin' as if it was spreadin' all over America. The Swedes, they think it his. I know it hisn't."

"But you've got your land all right?"

"Oh, yes; we've got our land, an' we never say aught against polygamy, o' course—father, an' mother, an' me."

On a table-land overlooking all the city stands the United States garrison of infantry and artillery. The State of Utah can do nearly anything it pleases until that much-to-be-desired hour when the Gentile vote shall quietly swamp out Mormonism; but the garrison is kept there in case of accidents. The big, shark-mouthed, pig-eared, heavy-boned farmers sometimes take to their creed with wildest fanaticism, and in past years have made life excessively unpleasant for the Gentile when he was few in the land. But to-day, so far from killing openly or secretly, or burning Gentile farms, it is all the Mormon dare do to feebly try to boycott the interloper. His journals preach defiance to the United States Government, and in the Tabernacle on a Sunday the preachers follow suit.

When I went there, the place was full of people who would have been much better for a washing. A man rose up and told them that

they were the chosen of God, the elect of Israel; that they were to obey their priests, and that there was a good time coming. I fancy that they had heard all this before so many times it produced no impression whatever, even as the sublimest mysteries of another faith lose salt through constant iteration. They breathed heavily through their noses, and stared straight in front of them—impassive as flat fish.

AMERICA'S DEFENCELESS COASTS

VII

AMERICA'S DEFENCELESS COASTS

JUST suppose that America were twenty days distant from England. Then a man could study its customs with undivided soul; but being so very near next door, he goes about the land with one eye on the smoke of the flesh-pots of the old country across the seas, while with the other he squints biliously and prejudicially at the alien.

I can lay my hand upon my sacred heart and affirm that up to to-day I have never taken three consecutive trips by rail without being delayed by an accident. That it was an accident to another train makes no difference. My own turn may come next.

A few miles from peaceful, pleasure-loving Lakewood they had managed to upset an express goods train to the detriment of the flimsy permanent way; and thus the train which should have left at three departed at seven in the evening. I was not angry. I was scarcely even interested. When an American train starts on time I begin to anticipate disaster—a visitation for such good luck, you understand.

Buffalo is a large village of a quarter of a million inhabitants, situated on the seashore, which is falsely called Lake Erie. It is a peaceful place, and more like an English county town than most of its friends.

Once clear of the main business streets, you launch upon miles and miles of asphalted roads running between cottages and cut-stone residences of those who have money and peace. All the Eastern cities own this fringe of elegance, but except in Chicago nowhere is the fringe deeper or more heavily widened than in Buffalo.

The American will go to a bad place because he cannot speak English, and is proud of it; but he knows how to make a home for himself and his mate, knows how to keep the grass green in front of his veranda, and how to fullest use the mechanism of life—hot water, gas, good bell-ropes, telephones, etc. His shops sell him delightful household fitments at very moderate rates, and he is encompassed with all manner of labor-saving appliances. This does not prevent his wife and his daughter working themselves to death over household drudgery; but the intention is good.

When you have seen the outside of a few hundred thousand of these homes and the insides of a few score, you begin to understand why the American (the respectable one) does not take a

deep interest in what they call "politics," and why he is so vaguely and generally proud of the country that enables him to be so comfortable. How can the owner of a dainty châlet, with smoked-oak furniture, imitation Venetian tapestry curtains, hot and cold water laid on, a bed of geraniums and hollyhocks, a baby crawling down the veranda, and a self-acting twirly-whirly hose gently hissing over the grass in the balmy dusk of an August evening—how can such a man despair of the Republic, or descend into the streets on voting days and mix cheerfully with "the boys"?

No, it is the stranger—the homeless jackal of a stranger—whose interest in the country is limited to his hotel-bill and a railway-ticket, that can run from Dan to Beersheba, crying:

"All is barren!"

Every good American wants a home—a pretty house and a little piece of land of his very own; and every other good American seems to get it.

It was when my gigantic intellect was grappling with this question that I confirmed a discovery half made in the West. The natives of most classes marry young—absurdly young. One of my informants—not the twenty-two-year-old husband I met on Lake Chautauqua—said that from twenty to twenty-four was about the usual

time for this folly. And when I asked whether the practice was confined to the constitutionally improvident classes, he said "No" very quickly. He said it was a general custom, and nobody saw anything wrong with it.

"I guess, perhaps, very early marriage may account for a good deal of the divorce," said he, reflectively.

Whereat I was silent. Their marriages and their divorces only concern these people; and neither I traveling, nor you, who may come after, have any right to make rude remarks about them. Only—only coming from a land where a man begins to lightly turn to thoughts of love not before he is thirty, I own that playing at housekeeping before that age rather surprised me. Out in the West, though, they marry, boys and girls, from sixteen upward, and I have met more than one bride of fifteen—husband aged twenty.

"When man and woman are agreed, what can the Kazi do?"

From those peaceful homes, and the envy they inspire (two trunks and a walking-stick and a bit of pine forest in British Columbia are not satisfactory, any way you look at them), I turned me to the lake front of Buffalo, where the steamers bellow to the grain elevators, and the locomotives yell to the coal-shutes, and the canal barges jostle the lumber-raft half a mile long as it snakes

across the water in tow of a launch, and earth, and sky, and sea alike are thick with smoke.

In the old days, before the railway ran into the city, all the business quarters fringed the lake-shore where the traffic was largest. To-day the business quarters have gone up-town to meet the railroad; the lake traffic still exists, but you shall find a narrow belt of red-brick desolation, broken windows, gap-toothed doors, and streets where the grass grows between the crowded wharves and the bustling city. To the lake front comes wheat from Chicago, lumber, coal, and ore, and a large trade in cheap excursionists.

It was my felicity to catch a grain steamer and an elevator emptying that same steamer. The steamer might have been two thousand tons burden. She was laden with wheat in bulk; from stem to stern, thirteen feet deep, lay the clean, red wheat. There was no twenty-five per cent. dirt admixture about it at all. It was wheat, fit for the grindstones as it lay. They manœuvred the fore-hatch of that steamer directly under an elevator—a house of red tin a hundred and fifty feet high. Then they let down into that fore-hatch a trunk as if it had been the trunk of an elephant, but stiff, because it was a pipe of iron-champed wood. And the trunk had a steel-shod nose to it, and contained an endless chain of steel buckets.

Then the captain swore, raising his eyes to heaven, and a gruff voice answered him from the place he swore at, and certain machinery, also in the firmament, began to clack, and the glittering, steel-shod nose of that trunk burrowed into the wheat, and the wheat quivered and sunk upon the instant as water sinks when the siphon sucks, because the steel buckets within the trunk were flying upon their endless round, carrying away each its appointed morsel of wheat.

The elevator was a Persian well wheel—a wheel squashed out thin and cased in a pipe, a wheel driven not by bullocks, but by much horse-power, licking up the grain at the rate of thousands of bushels the hour. And the wheat sunk into the fore-hatch while a man looked—sunk till the brown timbers of the bulkheads showed bare, and men leaped down through clouds of golden dust and shoveled the wheat furiously round the nose of the trunk, and got a steam-shovel of glittering steel and made that shovel also, till there remained of the grain not more than a horse leaves in the fold of his nose-bag.

In this manner do they handle wheat at Buffalo. On one side of the elevator is the steamer, on the other the railway track; and the wheat is loaded into the cars in bulk. Wah! wah! God is great, and I do not think He ever intended Gar

Sahai or Luckman Narain to supply England with her wheat. India can cut in not without profit to herself when her harvest is good and the American yield poor; but this very big country can, upon the average, supply the earth with all the beef and bread that is required.

A man in the train said to me:

"We kin feed all the earth, jest as easily as we kin whip all the earth."

Now the second statement is as false as the first is true. One of these days the respectable Republic will find this out.

Unfortunately we, the English, will never be the people to teach her; because she is a chartered libertine allowed to say and do anything she likes, from demanding the head of the empress in an editorial waste-basket, to chevying Canadian schooners up and down the Alaska Seas. It is perfectly impossible to go to war with these people, whatever they may do.

They are much too nice, in the first place, and in the second, it would throw out all the passenger traffic of the Atlantic, and upset the financial arrangements of the English syndicates who have invested their money in breweries, railways, and the like, and in the third, it's not to be done. Everybody knows that, no one better than the American.

Yet there are other powers who are not "ohai

band" (of the brotherhood)—China, for instance. Try to believe an irresponsible writer when he assures you that China's fleet to-day, if properly manned, could waft the entire American navy out of the water and into the blue. The big, fat Republic that is afraid of nothing, because nothing up to the present date has happened to make her afraid, is as unprotected as a jelly-fish. Not internally, of course—it would be madness for any Power to throw men into America; they would die—but as far as regards coast defence.

From five miles out at sea (I have seen a test of her "fortified" ports) a ship of the power of H. M. S. "Collingwood" (they haven't run her on a rock yet) would wipe out any or every town from San Francisco to Long Branch; and three first-class ironclads would account for New York, Bartholdi's Statue and all.

Reflect on this. 'Twould be "Pay up or go up" round the entire coast of the United States. To this furiously answers the patriotic American:

"We should not pay. We should invent a Columbiad in Pittsburg or—or anywhere else, and blow any outsider into h—l."

They might invent. They might lay waste their cities and retire inland, for they can subsist entirely on their own produce. Meantime, in a war waged the only way it could be waged by

an unscrupulous Power, their coast cities and their dock-yards would be ashes. They could construct their navy inland if they liked, but you could never bring a ship down to the waterways, as they stand now.

They could not, with an ordinary water patrol, despatch one regiment of men six miles across the seas. There would be about five million excessively angry, armed men pent up within American limits. These men would require ships to get themselves afloat. The country has no such ships, and until the ships were built New York need not be allowed a single-wheeled carriage within her limits.

Behold now the glorious condition of this Republic which has no fear. There is ransom and loot past the counting of man on her seaboard alone—plunder that would enrich a nation—and she has neither a navy nor half a dozen first-class ports to guard the whole. No man catches a snake by the tail, because the creature will sting; but you can build a fire around a snake that will make it squirm.

The country is supposed to be building a navy now. When the ships are completed her alliance will be worth having—if the alliance of any republic can be relied upon. For the next three years she can be hurt, and badly hurt. Pity it is that she is of our own blood, looking at the mat-

ter from a Pindarris point of view. Dog cannot eat dog.

These sinful reflections were prompted by the sight of the beautifully unprotected condition of Buffalo—a city that could be made to pay up five million dollars without feeling it. There are her companies of infantry in a sort of port there. A gun-boat brought over in pieces from Niagara could get the money and get away before she could be caught, while an unarmored gun-boat guarding Toronto could ravage the towns on the lakes. When one hears so much of the nation that can whip the earth, it is, to say the least of it, surprising to find her so temptingly spankable.

The average American citizen seems to have a notion that any Power engaged in strife with the Star Spangled Banner will disembark men from flat-bottomed boats on a convenient beach for the purpose of being shot down by local militia. In his own simple phraseology:

"Not by a darned sight. No, sir."

Ransom at long range will be about the size of it—cash or crash.

Let us revisit calmer scenes.

In the heart of Buffalo there stands a magnificent building which the population do innocently style a music-hall. Everybody comes here of evenings to sit around little tables and listen to a first-class orchestra. The place is something like

the Gaiety Theatre at Simla, enlarged twenty times. The "Light Brigade" of Buffalo occupy the boxes and the stage, "as it was at Simla in the days of old," and the others sit in the parquet. Here I went with a friend—poor or boor is the man who cannot pick up a friend for a season in America—and here was shown the really smart folk of the city. I grieve to say I laughed, because when an American wishes to be correct he sets himself to imitate the Englishman. This he does vilely, and earns not only the contempt of his brethren, but the amused scorn of the Briton.

I saw one man who was pointed out to me as being the glass of fashion hereabouts. He was aggressively English in his get-up. From eye-glass to trouser-hem the illusion was perfect, but —he wore with evening-dress buttoned boots with brown cloth tops! Not till I wandered about this land did I understand why the comic papers belabor the Anglomaniac.

Certain young men of the more idiotic sort launch into dog-carts and raiment of English cut, and here in Buffalo they play polo at four in the afternoon. I saw three youths come down to the polo-ground faultlessly attired for the game and mounted on their best ponies. Expecting a game, I lingered; but I was mistaken. These three shining ones with the very new yellow hide boots and the red silk sashes had assembled

themselves for the purpose of knocking the ball about. They smote with great solemnity up and down the grounds, while the little boys looked on. When they trotted, which was not seldom, they rose and sunk in their stirrups with a conscientiousness that cried out "Riding-school!" from afar.

Other young men in the park were riding after the English manner, in neatly cut riding-trousers and light saddles. Fate in derision had made each youth bedizen his animal with a checkered enameled leather brow-band visible half a mile away—a black-and-white checkered brow-band! They can't do it, any more than an Englishman, by taking cold, can add that indescribable nasal twang to his orchestra.

The other sight of the evening was a horror. The little tragedy played itself out at a neighboring table where two very young men and two very young women were sitting. It did not strike me till far into the evening that the pimply young reprobates were making the girls drunk. They gave them red wine and then white, and the voices rose slightly with the maidens' cheek flushes. I watched, wishing to stay, and the youths drank till their speech thickened and their eye-balls grew watery. It was sickening to see, because I knew what was going to happen. My friend eyed the group, and said:

"Maybe they're children of respectable people. I hardly think, though, they'd be allowed out without any better escort than these boys. And yet the place is a place where every one comes, as you see. They may be Little Immoralities—in which case they wouldn't be so hopelessly overcome with two glasses of wine. They may be"—

Whatever they were they got indubitably drunk—there in that lovely hall, surrounded by the best of Buffalo society. One could do nothing except invoke the judgment of Heaven on the two boys, themselves half sick with liquor. At the close of the performance the quieter maiden laughed vacantly and protested she couldn't keep her feet. The four linked arms, and staggering, flickered out into the street—drunk, gentlemen and ladies, as Davy's swine, drunk as lords! They disappeared down a side avenue, but I could hear their laughter long after they were out of sight.

And they were all four children of sixteen and seventeen. Then, recanting previous opinions, I became a prohibitionist. Better it is that a man should go without his beer in public places, and content himself with swearing at the narrow-mindedness of the majority; better it is to poison the inside with very vile temperance drinks, and to buy lager furtively at back-doors, than to bring

temptation to the lips of young fools such as the four I had seen. I understand now why the preachers rage against drink. I have said: "There is no harm in it, taken moderately;" and yet my own demand for beer helped directly to send those two girls reeling down the dark street to—God alone knows what end.

If liquor is worth drinking, it is worth taking a little trouble to come at—such trouble as a man will undergo to compass his own desires. It is not good that we should let it lie before the eyes of children, and I have been a fool in writing to the contrary. Very sorry for myself, I sought a hotel, and found in the hall a reporter who wished to know what I thought of the country. Him I lured into conversation about his own profession, and from him gained much that confirmed me in my views of the grinding tyranny of that thing which they call the Press here. Thus:

I—But you talk about interviewing people whether they like it or not. Have you no bounds beyond which even your indecent curiosity must not go?

He—I haven't struck 'em yet. What do you think of interviewing a widow two hours after her husband's death, to get her version of his life?

I—I think that is the work of a ghoul. Must the people have no privacy?

HE—There is no domestic privacy in America. If there was, what the deuce would the papers do? See here. Some time ago I had an assignment to write up the floral tributes when a prominent citizen had died.

I—Translate, please; I do not understand your pagan rites and ceremonies.

HE—I was ordered by the office to describe the flowers, and wreaths, and so on, that had been sent to a dead man's funeral. Well, I went to the house. There was no one there to stop me, so I yanked the tinkler—pulled the bell—and drifted into the room where the corpse lay all among the roses and smilax. I whipped out my notebook and pawed around among the floral tributes, turning up the tickets on the wreaths and seeing who had sent them. In the middle of this I heard some one saying: "Please, oh, please!" behind me, and there stood the daughter of the house, just bathed in tears—

I—You unmitigated brute!

HE—Pretty much what I felt myself. "I'm very sorry, miss," I said, "to intrude on the privacy of your grief. Trust me, I shall make it as little painful as possible."

I—But by what conceivable right did you outrage—

HE—Hold your horses. I'm telling you. Well, she didn't want me in the house at all, and

between her sobs fairly waved me away. I had half the tributes described, though, and the balance I did partly on the steps when the stiff 'un came out, and partly in the church. The preacher gave the sermon. That wasn't my assignment. I skipped about among the floral tributes while he was talking. I could have made no excuse if I had gone back to the office and said that a pretty girl's sobs had stopped me obeying orders. I had to do it. What do you think of it all?

I (slowly)—Do you want to know?

HE (with his notebook ready)—Of course. How do you regard it?

I—It makes me regard your interesting nation with the same shuddering curiosity that I should bestow on a Pappan cannibal chewing the scalp off his mother's skull. Does that convey any idea to your mind? It makes me regard the whole pack of you as heathens—real heathens—not the sort you send missions to—creatures of another flesh and blood. You ought to have been shot, not dead, but through the stomach, for your share in the scandalous business, and the thing you call your newspaper ought to have been sacked by the mob, and the managing proprietor hanged.

HE—From which, I suppose you have nothing of that kind in your country?

Oh! "Pioneer," venerable "Pioneer," and you not less honest press of India, who are occasion-

ally dull but never blackguardly, what could I say? A mere "No," shouted never so loudly, would not have met the needs of the case. I said no word.

The reporter went away, and I took a train for Niagara Falls, which are twenty-two miles distant from this bad town, where girls get drunk of nights and reporters trample on corpses in the drawing-rooms of the brave and the free!

JUL 9 1938

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